



# NAVY NEWS

APRIL 2016

## Belize? Yes please

*Jungle training for commandos*

## Farewell old friend

*Junglie Sea Kings prepare for  
their final flight after 36 years*

## Cool for cats

● A battlefield Wildcat of 847 Naval Air Squadron carries out a reconnaissance patrol at dusk near Bardufoss in northern Norway.  
Picture: PO(Phot) Si Ethell





# IN THE DEPTHS OF THE ARCTIC WINTER, A SNOWY SMORGASBORD OF MILITARY TRAINING BY LAND, SEA AND AIR



## AFTER cats quite obviously comes horses.

From the fast, agile, small Wildcat, on our front cover to the opposite end of the US Marine Corps' giant, lumbering CH-53 Super Stallion – at 33 tonnes it's more than five times heavier than a Wildcat, three times a Sea King, double a Merlin.

Labouring across the frozen, snow-covered wilds of Trøndelag county (roughly on the same latitude as Reykjavik) are the men of X-Ray Company, 45 Commando, ready to play their part in the land phase of the winter's largest war games, Cold Response, testing the ability of more than a dozen nations and 15,000 men and women to protect NATO's northern flank.

Hosted every couple of years by the Norwegians, it's typically staged in the fjords, hills and valleys around Harstad, Narvik, Setermoen.

This year, the Norwegian hosts shifted the emphasis 400 miles to the south – and no longer inside the Arctic Circle.

Which meant instead of temperatures of -30°C by night in the field... it was 'only' ten below zero and, during the day, a positively balmy 0°C.

Shifting the 2016 exercise south brought the Royal Marines into contact with hallowed ground.

Deposited some 80 miles north

of Trondheim, the commandos – in addition to X-Ray, Kilo Company, 42 Commando, and Viking armoured vehicles rolled on to dry (well, snow-blanketed) land by Dutch landing craft – closed in on the small town of Namsos (pop.13,000 or roughly the size of Petersfield) from the northwest.

Here, 76 years ago, British troops – led by an advance detachment of Royal Marines – were landed as part of a pincer movement to drive the Germans out of Trondheim.

Instead, they were hounded by the German Air Force and driven back on to the ships barely a fortnight later, leaving Trondheim – and the rest of Norway – in enemy hands for the rest of the war.

Three quarters of a century later and inhabitants of the (rebuilt) small town watched from the front room of their wooden chalets as the commandos grappled with American paratroopers and Swedish mechanised infantry for command of two bridges spanning the River Namsen. Driveways. Gardens. Alleys. Main roads. Side streets. All became battlegrounds.

Scouting ahead of the attacking Brits and Dutch were US Marines of the Black Sea Rotational Force, who'd spent a month receiving instruction on fighting in the Arctic from Royal Marines mountain leaders.

They selected Porsangermoen – not

100 miles from the North Cape, only 1,400 from the Pole itself – as the base for their training, contending with five to seven hours of daylight and temperatures by day typically of -7°C.

"They helped us from the beginning – from getting out snowshoes on to operating on skis with our weapons," said L/Cpl Thomas Powers, a fire team leader with the USMC.

"The Royal Marines are knowledgeable about this environment – it's been an honour to be taught by them."

Indeed. As a bunch of civvies discovered...

They accepted the invitation to join their employees – Royal Marines Reservists – in the Arctic for a taste of what being a spare-time commando is like.

More than 90 reservists and their instructors headed to the icy wilds around Asegarden camp, just outside Harstad, to learn, refresh or pass on Arctic survival skills, led by RMR Scotland from Glasgow.

They had half a dozen BV tracked vehicles, a pair of skidoos, one Land Rover and, er, a VW Caravelle to play with as they gave their civvy street bosses – who headed to Norway under the government's SaBRE initiative which aims to give employers a better understanding of life as a reservist – the

Arctic warfare experience.

There can be no better understanding than watching your staff survive avalanche drills, ice breaking, living in a snow hole (which is a hole, er, carved out of the snow) for one or two marines to spend the night in.

Now you could return to your plush accommodation with its heated floors, en suite, comfy bed and saunas to leave your reservists to it in the field.

Or you could join them in a (heated) Norwegian tent for a more authentic Arctic experience after a brief snowshoe yomp through the wilds, played out against the backdrop of the Northern Lights.

"I'm full of admiration for the work ethic, teamwork, dealing with adversity and comradeship I saw," said Stewart Tait of HSBC bank. "My challenge is now to make the best use of these skills within my own company."

Lynn Johnson of United Utilities, which provides seven million people in the North-West with water, added: "I'm completely overwhelmed and in awe of what I've seen."

"The qualities I've observed while I've been in Norway have shown me the depth of my reservist employees' skills and their work ethic."

Ok, that's the land bit covered. What about the sea?

Well... The naval element assigned to Cold Response, built around NATO's Standing Maritime Group 1, included frigates (permanently attached) Iron Duke and (temporarily) Sutherland.

Crew of the latter built some jolly nice snowmen on the jetty at Trondheim (complete with tallied caps and a fearsome drill instructor with pace stick), sailors on the former poured pails of icy water over each other on the flight deck.

In between there was a spot of (simulated) war fighting around the fjords: submarine hunting, surface attacks, a spot of jamming.

"Cold Response was hard work – but hugely enjoyable," said Iron Duke's operations officer Lt Cdr David Berry. "We were granted the privilege of leading the task group as the surface and anti-submarine warfare commander, which was a great challenge."

"The true value of Cold Response, however, was demonstrating the multinational effort and improving the task group's operational effectiveness."

Spanish Rear Admiral Jose Delgado, in charge of the Anglo-Spanish-Norwegian Maritime Group 1, reckons that having demonstrated their ability to operate under the challenging climatic conditions Norway presents, his force is "better prepared to meet and deter any threat to Alliance populations and territory".







pictures: po(phot) si ethell (chf), nato and usmc

His group should be in the Latvian capital Riga by now – but only after (figuratively) dipping its toes in the Arctic.

Iron Duke ventured to 67°01N – around 30 miles inside the Arctic Circle – taking her to a more northerly latitude than Norway.

And, more importantly, it prompted the resurrection of a seafaring tradition: crossing the line.

The ceremony for passing over the imaginary line which separates the Arctic from warmer, more southerly waters, is a near carbon copy of its equatorial counterpart... but much colder... and those initiated into the Order of the Blue Nose receive a blue nose (lovingly painted on the end of their hooters by shipmates) – as does the ship herself; the bull ring on her bow is giving a temporary makeover (even CO Cdr Ben Aldous chipped in with his brush).

For all this, the sailors receive a permanent reminder – a certificate of proof (signed by the skipper) – and an almost-permanent reminder courtesy of that blue paint...

After concerted scrubbing, noses were suitably clean to receive guests distinguished or otherwise during a weekend stopover in the Norwegian capital.

Berthed on the east side of the historic

Akershus Fortress, Iron Duke opened her gangway to Oslovisians, dignitaries, Norwegian ministers and Britain's Ambassador to Norway, Sarah Gillett.

As Iron Duke and her NATO friends nudged east, the Merlins of 845 NAS were hopping in a south-westerly direction, their stint in Norway done. (This is the air bit, in case you were wondering...)

The helicopter is the ultimate method of transport in this part of the world for shifting troops and their kit; the commando fliers have been using Bardufoss – roughly half-way between Narvik and Tromsø – for decades.

As the crow (or CHF whirlybird) flies, Bardufoss is only 50 miles away from either – but a two-hour drive up, down and around the fjords and valleys of Troms county. A helicopter will get you there in 20 or so minutes.

This year was the first that did not see Sea Kings over the Arctic; the veteran workhorses were left behind in Yeovilton as they retired from active duties at the end of March.

Their replacement – the battlefield Merlin: big, green, faster, more powerful, greater range, equipped with a computerised cockpit – has limited experience operating in such an extreme environment. It only made its debut at

Bardufoss a couple of years ago, whereas Sea Kings have been operating in the Arctic for 35 years.

So nearly 60 men and women, mostly from 845 Naval Air Squadron, a handful of comrades from 846 Squadron, half a dozen RAF personnel – the Merlins were transferred to the Fleet Air Arm from the air force (some of the helicopters still bear the insignia) – headed to Norway, many for the first time.

Before air or ground crew could give any thought to flying the two Merlins, all personnel had to undergo the cold weather survival course (which teaches how to survive in cold weather...), because the Commando Helicopter Force is more likely to operate in the field than any other branch of the Fleet Air Arm.

Once accustomed to the world of snow holes, ice breaking (jumping into icy water, clambering out again with kit), living off the land, the squadron was ready to take to Norwegian skies.

"This was my first time in Norway and it has been a very different environment to work in – but I think we met the challenges well," said Air Engineering Technician Ryan Stuart.

"It makes a change from normal, warmer conditions and has required a different set of skills. It has also been great to work with the Norwegian

military and provide help to the local population and rescue services."

They carried out 350 landings in the snow by day and night – the powerful down draught from the Merlin's rotor blades throws up a veritable snowstorm as it comes into land, depriving the aircrew of visibility.

The helicopters flew an average of four sorties a day during the 18 days they were required, clocking up 120 hours in Arctic skies, with navigation, load ferrying and general mountain flying duties all carried out.

Most importantly, 11 pilots and the same number of aircrewmembers – responsible for the safety of the troops being carried and the handling of the aircraft when landing in tight spots or carrying loads – earned their Arctic qualifications.

"As the squadron's most junior aircrewman, I was very much looking forward to my first CHF detachment after several tours of Afghanistan," said Cpl Simon Wynne.

"The Arctic environment provided new and unique challenges – both for myself and the Merlin – but this month has helped develop my operating ability and experience tremendously."

As a thank-you to their hosts, the Merlins lifted two tonnes of timber and flew it to remote huts to help National

Park Rangers; work which would have taken more than a month using skidoos took a pair of Merlins one morning.

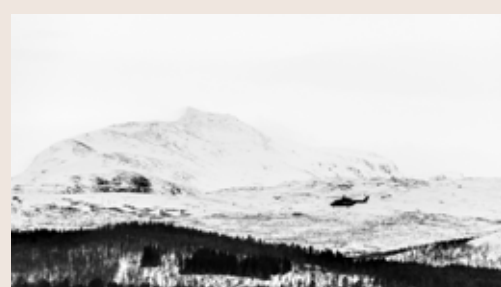
Working in mountainous terrain and sub-zero temperatures, engineers loaded and then safely unloaded the wood at their destination.

"Clockwork remains one of the very best training establishments available," said 845's senior pilot, in charge of the detachment at Bardufoss. He was on his third deployment to Norway – but his first with Merlin.

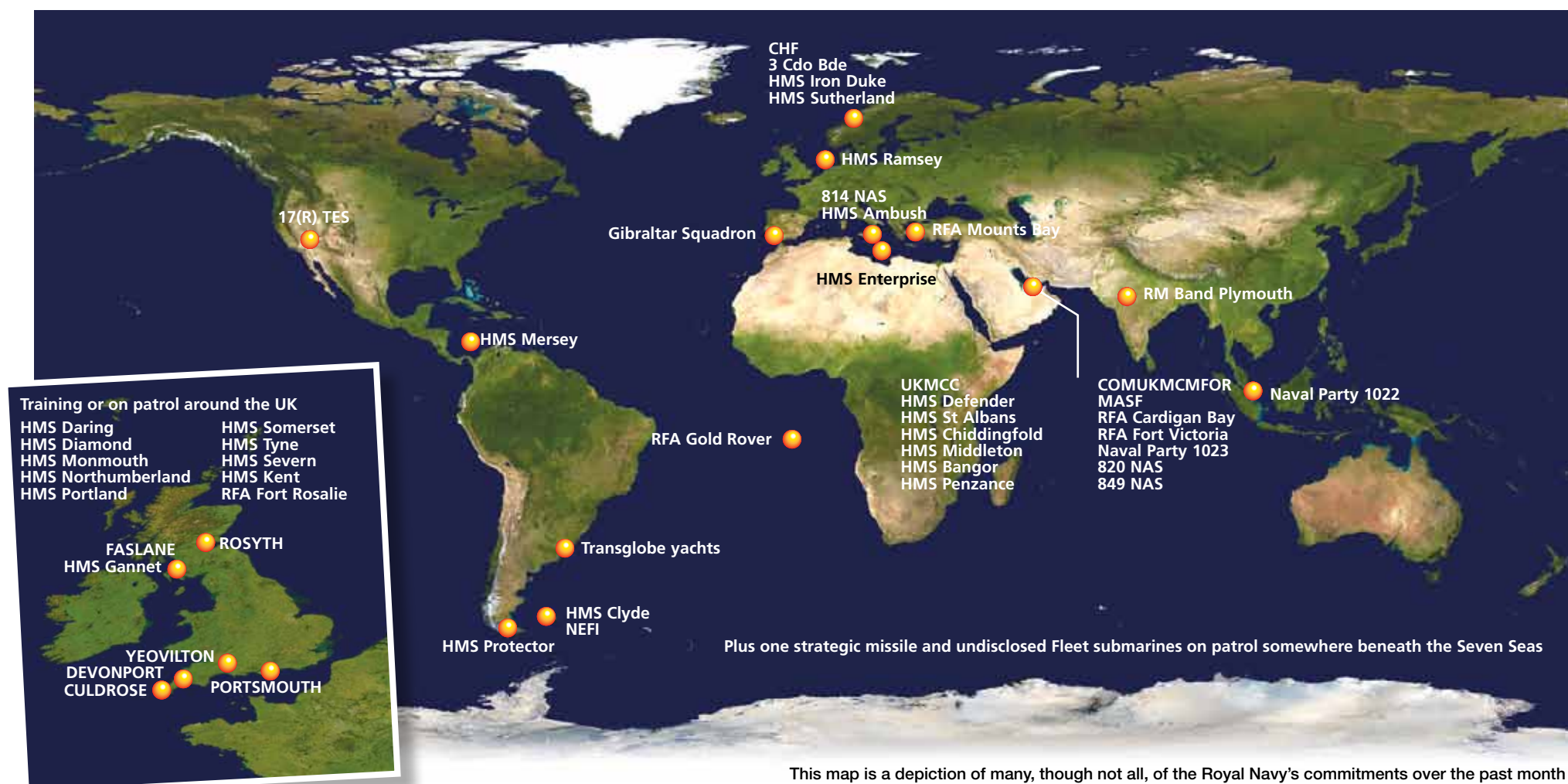
"I am immensely proud of the engineering and support team who have achieved magnificent levels of serviceability. This, coupled with the hard work of the aircrew instructors, has enabled us to surpass our training expectations and come away from the Arctic Circle better prepared for operations in a cold weather mountainous environment."

Returning to RAF Benson in Oxfordshire, 845 NAS will continue their Merlin training through the spring before moving to Yeovilton in the summer to join the rest of the battlefield Merlins at the Commando Helicopter Force's spiritual home... which is considerably warmer than Bardufoss... even in January...

**Wildcat's baptism of ice, centre pages**







This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month

AVIATION is at the top of the agenda this month with a plethora of articles about the Fleet Air Arm.

We kick off with the Merlin Mk3s of **845 NAS** (see pages 2-3), who have been based in Bardufoss in Norway for this year's CHF Clockwork. The exercise saw 11 pilots and 11 aircrewmen earn their Arctic qualifications as they got accustomed to the world of snow holes, ice breaking and living off the land before taking to the skies.

CHF's **847 NAS** were also at Bardufoss with their Wildcat as the new aircraft made its debut in Norway, arriving in mid-January when the temperatures were 15° below zero (see pages 22-23).

While CHF get to grips with their new aircraft, it was time to say farewell to the Sea King Mk4 (see pages 45-48). The last unit to fly the big green Junglies, **848 NAS**, were completing a farewell flypast in central and south-west England as Navy News went to press (you'll have to wait until May's edition to read all about it).

The **Fleet Air Arm** is also currently working on the return of front-line fast jets and pilot Lt Cdr Nathan Gray has won the accolade of Outstanding Graduate at the prestigious US Navy Test Pilot School (see pages 8-9). He will now spend the next three years as the RN's F-35 Developmental Test Pilot at Patuxent River in Maryland.

The FAA is drawing up plans for a fitting memorial service for the greatest Naval aviator in its history (see page 17). **Capt Eric 'Winkle' Brown** died one month after his 97th birthday.

At sea this month was **RFA Fort Victoria** (see page 6) doubling as a 'mini carrier' while supporting the international naval effort to halt terrorist activities in the Indian Ocean and Gulf.

It was second time lucky for **HMS Mersey** as she visited Grand Cayman (see page 7) on her seven-month Caribbean and North Atlantic deployment. High winds and rough seas forced the River-class patrol vessel to postpone her first attempt to enter George Town.

Minehunter **HMS Ramsay** continued her Baltic deployment (see page 7) as part of Standing NATO Mine Counter Measure Group 1 by pairing up with task group flagship FGS Donau at Kiel in Germany.

Amphibious assault ship **HMS Bulwark** returned to operational fitness following maintenance by landing Royal Marines on a Cornish beach (see page 7). Bulwark also hosted the first landing onto the ship by the new battlefield Merlin helicopter.

The Royal Navy welcomed **HMS Artful** into the Fleet, the third of the Astute-class attack submarines (see page 6).

Enjoying some tropical weather last month were Royal Marines from **Lima Company, 42 Cdo** as they went to Belize in Central America for some specialist jungle warfare training (see page 11).

At the other end of the temperature scale were 11 Naval personnel who completed an arduous journey from Antarctica (see page 20) and crossed South Georgia to follow in the footsteps of Sir Ernest Shackleton during the six-week **Antarctic Endurance** exercise.

On the training front and first aid teaching at **HMS Raleigh** just got more realistic thanks to the arrival of a Sea King and Lynx (see page 15).

Proving they have what it takes to train to join the **Royal Navy Photographic Branch** were three candidates for the latest selection course at RAF Cosford (see page 21).

And finally please take the time to complete our survey to help us shape the future of **Navy News**. You can either complete the survey in its paper form or on the internet, details of which are on page 13.

# Final piece of jigsaw

THE ideas of the Royal Navy's best and brightest are needed to help complete the final piece of its future carrier task group 'jigsaw'.

At an event to formally launch the Fleet Solid Support (FSS) project held on board RFA Fort Rosalie, senior officers issued a clarion call to the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Fleet Auxiliary and others from across defence to help shape the design of three huge support ships which will provide HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales and their air group – and their task force vessels – with food, stores, spares, bombs and missiles.

The Strategic Defence and Security Review in November last year included a commitment by the government to build three new solid support ships to replace Forts Rosalie, Austin and Victoria.

"For 18 years I've been seeing computer-generated images of aircraft carriers. Now they're real and one will be on this berth in a year's time," said Rear Admiral James Morse CB, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Capability).

"The component capabilities that make up the Maritime Task Group will be the most potent instrument of national power projection that the surface fleet has ever wielded and they need to have the assurance of a strong logistics chain."

Delegates, including

representatives from the Army, RAF, US Navy and the Ministry of Defence organisations Defence Equipment and Support and Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, were told about the aims of the project and the continued part they had to play in order to move forward quickly.

At 23,384 tonnes and 185 metres in length, Rosalie and Austin are capable of carrying 12,000 cubic metres of stores in four holds – imagine 12 million litre bottles of water.

The new vessels will need to carry more than their predecessors and deliver at a tempo that the current ships cannot achieve, Cdr John Atwill, Maritime Capability lead for FSS, told delegates.

"The factory within FSS is vital," he said. "The FSS will have to build loads to deliver what the customer demands. The best use of space and the need to move stock quickly; how we use people and equipment efficiently will all have to be balanced."

As well as replenishing the carriers, complete with their strike aircraft the F-35B, the new ships will need to be able to re-supply other vessels in the task group as well as NATO ships and to also ensure they can supply enough stores and ammunition to sustain Royal Marines operating ashore.

Fort Rosalie's rare visit to Portsmouth enabled harbour tugs to put in some practice of towing large vessels ahead of the arrival next year of Queen Elizabeth.

She was met by Serco tugs Bountiful, Indulgent and Independent just south of the Nab Tower – about ten miles from the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour.

Fort Rosalie CO Capt Gerard Patterson said: "The tugs wanted to practise the techniques required to tow a large ship. They got what they wanted and the beauty of it was it was a low-water arrival and it doesn't get any more difficult than that."

Serco's Portsmouth Operations Manager Stuart Laidler said: "We have had some very positive feedback and feel confident ahead of the arrival of HMS Queen Elizabeth."

Fort Rosalie is currently providing sea training to many new cadets and trainees who will spend their careers in the new FSS and Tide-class tankers.

Picture: LA(Phot) Iggy Roberts





# Artful's joyful occasion

THE most advanced underwater fighting machine the nation has ever possessed has been formally welcomed into the elite 'brotherhood' of the Silent Service.

Watched by families, friends and VIPs, the ship's company of HMS Artful proudly showed off their £1bn submarine as she was commissioned into the Fleet during a ceremony on the jetty built to accommodate the hunter-killer and her sisters – two of whom, Astute and Ambush, are already in service.

Chaplain of the Fleet the Venerable Ian Wheatley led proceedings, while Lady Zambellas – Artful's sponsor and the wife of First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George – chatted with the crew, inspected the guard of honour, and plunged a knife into a large commissioning cake after formal proceedings concluded.

"Over a decade has passed since her keel was laid, so it is hugely rewarding for everyone involved with the project to finally see the White Ensign flying from Artful's stern," she told those gathered in Faslane under leaden late-winter skies.

"While the technology inside is impressive, it is the ship's company who really give Artful her soul. Through their expertise and a good sense of fun, I know they will live up to her name, and



● Senior rates on the casing bow their heads in a prayer for their boat and (right) Lady Zambellas chats with members of the guard of honour

I look forward to supporting her in the many years ahead."

AB(WS) Tom Brown took the opportunity of Artful's commissioning to introduce his fiancée to "my other family".

He continued: "The Submarine Service is like a brotherhood which people don't understand. They ask: Do you have windows? Do you get Facebook? No we don't because we're underwater. People are quite taken aback when you tell them that – they cannot understand how submariners can

put up with it.

"It's a very challenging job, but also a rewarding one. We just crack on, get into the mindset. It takes a special person to be able to do what we do, to live under the waves, with minimal contact with family, friends, loved ones. It's exceptionally difficult."

AB(WS) Steve Farmer, sonar operator, who's previously served in Trafalgar-class submarines, showed his dad around a boat for the first time.

"The technology is very advanced – but it's also a lot more

user-friendly. I actually quite enjoy using it," he said.

"The camaraderie between us all is what makes Artful special. Down there, we're a tight-knit family – and it's good fun to be part of that."

As the third of the Navy's Astute-class boats, Artful was officially handed over to the RN at the end of last year – just four months after arriving on the Clyde from Barrow, where the class of seven nuclear-powered submarines is being built.

She's conducted a series of trials and tests – dives (followed by surfacing, thankfully), systems checks and firing six heavyweight Spearfish torpedoes at the ranges of the British Underwater Testing and Evaluation Centre off the Kyle of Lochalsh.

Artful steals a lead on her older

sisters as the first RN boat to be equipped with the new Common Combat System, a digital 'brain' which controls – and makes sense of the masses of data provided by – all the state-of-the-art sensors fitted on board.

"It takes her capability over and above anything we have had in the Royal Navy before," said Artful's CO Cdr Stuart Armstrong.

"The boat is cutting edge, the newest and most advanced of the three Astute-class submarines in service.

"But she relies on the skill and dedication of her crew – we rely on each other's technical expertise. We are a close-knit community in the Submarine Service. We also have a great sense of humour and work really well as a team."

## F-35 pilots try new headgear

PROTOTYPES of the new hi-tech helmet worn by Royal Navy and RAF pilots flying the F-35B Lightning II strike fighters are being put through their paces.

Experts from the F-35 Joint Programme Office in the USA are working with manufacturers Rockwell Collins to test the new headgear, which weighs 4.63lbs – 6oz lighter than the old existing helmets – and will help ease some strain on smaller pilots' necks.

The Generation III helmets – unique to each pilot – cost around £260,000 (\$400,000) apiece and projects airspeed, heading, altitude, targeting information and warnings on the visor, rather than on a traditional heads-up display; it's like wearing a laptop on your head.

## Protector's world tour

ICE breaker HMS Protector has completed her stint in the frozen wastes and is gearing up for duties in warmer waters after arriving in Punta Arenas – marking a full circumnavigation of the globe since October.

Since leaving home, the ice patrol vessel has sailed more than 18,500 nautical miles of which 3,000 were across the Southern Ocean.

Close to the ice edge, the bridge team encountered huge icebergs, some measuring more than half a nautical mile in diameter. HMS Protector sailed solo and was at times more than 1,000 nautical miles from any other ship or human settlement in Antarctica – and more than 2,000 nautical miles from South America and New Zealand.

# Tigers beating about the 'bush

...AND IF you look out of the window to your right, you'll see a £1bn nuclear submarine...

The hunter eyes the hunted as a Flying Tiger banks over HMS Ambush during NATO's largest anti-submarine hunting exercise in the Mediterranean.

For a fortnight, friendly relations between compatriots were put aside for Dynamic Manta as the Merlins of 814 NAS did their best to hunt down and destroy the Mighty Bush... which, in turn, did her best to evade their efforts.

Actually Ambush wasn't there simply as prey. She's built to hunt down and kill any enemy submarines which might pose a threat either to the UK's nuclear deterrent or a surface task group (and, for good measure, she can sink ships, lob cruise missiles on to targets and gather intelligence).

Indeed, elements of Dynamic Manta (it was known as Proud Manta in previous incarnations) pitted submarine against submarine – as well as the battle raging on the surface with warships ping-ponging their sonar, maritime patrol aircraft dropping sonobuoys, Merlins lowering their dipping sonar.

More than 60 Royal Navy personnel from the Culdrose squadron headed out to eastern Sicily with two Mk2 Merlins.

Ships, submarines, helicopters and maritime patrol aircraft from eight NATO nations accepted the invite to play in waters about 100 miles off the Sicilian coast.

As they did last spring when supporting the international rescue mission plucking migrants from ill-equipped boats in the central Mediterranean, the Flying Tigers made Sigonella Naval Air Station – an Italian-US Navy base just outside Catania, in the shadow of Mount Etna – their home.



The Tigers clocked up 15 sorties during the exercise, crews spending nearly four whole days in the cab (that includes the 2,800-mile round trip to Sigonella, via Lorient in Brittany and Hyères, near Toulon, in southern France).

"The squadron's engineers were essential to Dynamic Manta – they maintained the aircraft for the entire exercise, and we flew almost 90 hours – including the two-day flights across Europe," said pilot Lt Tim Strickland.

"They were working from a building loaned to us by the Americans at Sigonella, but maintaining the aircraft outside, under the watchful eye of Mount Etna – which decided to behave herself and not erupt during their time there."

Which is a good thing. Lava's bad for the locals. The ash cloud from a volcano is very bad for aircraft engines (remember the international flight chaos caused by the eruption of Eyjafjallajökull in Iceland back in 2010).

As Rear Admiral Giorgio Lazio, the Italian officer directing the exercise, succinctly put it: "hunting submarines is probably the most challenging job at sea".

The Flying Tigers and their Marina Militare counterparts who use the Italian version of Merlin, the AW101, were the only

submarine-hunting helicopters committed to Dynamic Manta, armed with torpedoes and depth charges should they come across any boats.

The Merlin crews (two pilots, one observer, one aircrewman for each mission) were assisted during the exercise by a small team from the Royal Navy's Maritime Warfare Centre whose tactical and scientific expertise was used to analyse each sortie, which was recorded on the Mk2s impressive suite of sensors and computers.

Back on the ground, the recordings were run through a mission 'action replay' for the experts who offered feedback to the fliers on improving their hunting techniques.

"Travelling to Sicily to participate in Dynamic Manta has allowed Britain to demonstrate its capability in anti-submarine warfare," said 814's Commanding Officer Cdr Brendan Spoor.

"As well as practising operating alongside our NATO partners, we have also proved to them our effectiveness in this role.

"Our contribution to the exercise was highly successful and I am extremely proud of the men and women who flew and maintained the aircraft during our time there."



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## RN-led team takes over

THE Royal Navy takes over directing the international effort to stifle terrorist activity in the Indian Ocean this month.

A battle staff from HMS Excellent in Portsmouth heads to the Gulf to take charge of Combined Task Force 150, policing more than two million square miles of sea on the lookout for vessels smuggling weapons and drugs which either fund or support terrorism.

Last month, Australian frigate HMAS Darwin – assigned to CTF150 – bagged a sizeable weapons haul on a dhow: nearly 2,000 AK47 rifles, 100 rocket-propelled grenades, mortars and machine-guns will never reach the hands of fundamentalists. And in February HMAS Melbourne scored her fifth drugs bust working for the group, seizing around £20m of heroin; the proceeds of illegal narcotics are known to fund terrorism.

The British-led staff – personnel from the Royal Navy will be joined by RAF and Royal Marines, plus officers from NATO and regional navies – went through a thorough combined assessment at their headquarters on Whale Island to prove they were ready to direct the challenging operation.

Personnel from across the Combined Maritime Forces – a coalition of more than two dozen of the world's navies – take it in turns to direct task force operations. When Cdre Guy Robinson and his team take the reins of CTF150, it will be the 12th time since 2001 the Royal Navy has done so.

CTF150 is one of three naval forces dotted around the Middle East; while it deals with the threat of terrorism and provides security on the high seas, Task Force 151 tackles piracy (and currently has British frigate HMS St Albans attached), and 152 is focused on stability and security in the Gulf itself.

The scale of CTF 150's task has been likened to providing police cover for an area the size of western Europe with six patrol cars – around half a dozen vessels are assigned to the group, operating independently, hundreds of miles apart, but with a common aim.

## Ta for new radar

LOCKHEED Martin in Havant have been given £44m to provide the core of the surface and submarine fleet with a new navigation radar system to improve safety above and below the waves.

Naval Vigilance Radar will be installed on more than 60 vessels – from Type 23 frigates down to P2000 patrol boats, the entire RFA flotilla and all classes of nuclear submarines. In addition, the system will be installed at five shore establishments.



## Victoria's plum mission

HELICOPTERS. Loads of 'em. (With apologies to the cast of *Zulu*...)

Ok, so there's only a solitary Chinook here, disappearing into the Gulf sunset. But it's one of four different helicopter types hopping on to and off the flight deck of RFA Fort Victoria, which has doubled up as makeshift aircraft carrier for the UK and her allies in the region.

Baggers, a Merlin, this wocca-wocca and an Apache have all landed on the auxiliary oiler and replenishment vessel – with the latter gunship making its debut landing on such a vessel.

Currently deployed as the Kipion-ready tanker, Fort Vic has taken part in numerous multi-aircraft flight operations.

Palembang Flight from 849 NAS with its 'eyes in the sky' Airborne Surveillance and Control Sea Kings was first deployed on Fort Vic to patrol the heavens – and waters (its radar is at home looking for contacts on the surface/ground as it is in the sky)... followed by Normandy and then Okinawa Flights as the Culdrose-based squadron took it in turns to conduct sorties.

Okinawa achieved the first maritime night vision device qualification for the Baggers and the first airborne 'relief in place' operation for a number of years.

Despite a number of engineering challenges, they have achieved multi-spot operations, providing situational awareness and fighter control support to the French carrier, FS Charles de Gaulle, which has been launching repeated air strikes against the fundamentalists of Daesh in Iraq and Syria.

"The support Fort Victoria has given to us is exceptional," said 849's senior pilot Lt Cdr Simon Wood. "The ability to be in the best position to provide the wide area maritime picture to the Charles de Gaulle and her battle group has paid dividends.

"Training of this quality is very hard to come by and the experience of working with a multinational force of ships, helicopters and jets has enabled Okinawa Flight to hone their skills.

"During the period the ship has acted like a 'mini carrier' for us and is rapidly becoming a home from home."

Merlins from 820 Naval Air Squadron (also Culdrosers) are the other regular visitors to Fort Vic, allowing her aircrew to gain valuable deck-landing training.

And the auxiliary Fort Victoria also spent a day undertaking at-sea training with whirlybirds from the United Arab Emirates. This involved small boat work as well as more deck-landing training for two of their helicopters, a Chinook and an Apache.

RFA Fort Victoria also performed a Vertical Replenishment at Sea with HMAS Melbourne using her Seahawk (which is the maritime version of the legendary Blackhawk). This was a quick and straightforward transfer of essential fresh supplies loaded on behalf of Melbourne during Fort Victoria's previous port visit.

"The last few weeks have reinforced the versatility of Fort Victoria," said her CO Capt Kevin Rimell RFA.

"Maritime aviation is an essential element of our business and 849 Squadron being fully integrated has been key to our success. The opportunity to extend our facilities to other nationalities has been the icing on the cake."



## Lion ready to take a dip

SO THAT'S what the lion's bottom looks like.

Two sailors from HMS Albion stare up at the stern of the assault ship with just two months to go before the waters lap around the 577ft hull again – and the sleeping giant of the Fleet gradually comes back to life.

Albion – nicknamed The Lion thanks to the imposing beast sitting proudly on the White Cliffs of Dover on the ship's badge – was mothballed in her native Devonport in the wake of the 2010 Defence Review, with the task of leading an amphibious task group falling upon her younger sister HMS Bulwark.

But since the autumn of 2014, life has gradually been breathed back into Albion – in a year's time the two assault ships will trade places and it will be Bulwark's turn to enter extended readiness after an exhausting five years of near continuous action.

It requires a 4,000-strong team of engineers from Babcock, the MOD, plus a growing ship's company (currently numbering 85) to ready Albion for renewed front-line duties.

Dehumidification and the attention of engineers during the ship's time in stasis meant the team regenerating her found the 18,000-tonne leviathan in remarkably good condition when they first stepped aboard.

But they have to complete 110 alterations and additions to the ship – everything from scraping then repainting the hull, to a raft of enhancements inside and out, work demanding 1.2 million man hours (which would take one person 137 years...).

When finished (early 2017), they will have installed a much improved combat system, including Phalanx automated guns to fend off air/seaborne attacks and the 3D Artisan radar which is becoming standard fit across the Fleet (it can track 800 potential targets simultaneously).

Rather less sexily, there's an improved fresh water system to keep the engines cool and an updated fire detection system to, er, detect fires.

And although Albion has been lying dormant for half a decade, her 85 sailors have been keen to keep her soul alive by ensuring that links with affiliations didn't wither.

The ship's sponsor, Princess Anne, visited in October 2015 giving her royal seal of approval to the rebirth and met local school children involved in an engineering project. And Senior Naval Officer Cdr Steve Ward has visited the Mercian regiment and Cheshire Council to renew ties, and the Worshipful Company of Brewers remain engaged with the ship.

"Having joined Albion in September 2014 when there was only a handful of personnel standing by, no lighting, ventilation or power, it has been an incredible journey to get her to this stage," said Cdr Mark Hocking, in charge of Albion's weapon engineering department.

"The ship's company is growing by the day with all the infrastructure of a running unit in place, and to see the new equipment and systems coming to life is a massive milestone."

With the external hull work almost complete and the ship due to refloat in the middle of this year, the focus is now on ship's staff moving onboard in January 2017 before commencing sea trials later in the year.

Picture: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies



## Bay-class act and Duncan's double delight

DRUG-busting and life-saving efforts by the men and women of RFA Lyme Bay earned their vessel the title of 'ship of the year'.

The amphibious support ship spent six months in the Caribbean, dividing her time between tackling drug-running and providing support to communities hit by natural disaster.

Twice the disaster-relief teams were called into action: first in the wake of Tropical Storm Erika which hit parts of Dominica, then in remote islands in the Bahamas after Tropical Storm Joaquin smashed its way through the region.

And in the war against illegal narcotics, the Lynx was used to scout for drug plantations – leading to

arrests on the ground by local police – while the combination of the ship, helicopter and US Coast Guard ensured \$53m of cocaine will never reach its intended market after intercepting traffickers.

And Britain's newest destroyer has two pieces of silverware to put in her trophy cabinet thanks to the successes scored on her maiden deployment.

HMS Duncan was singled out as best destroyer (out of six in the Type 45 flotilla) and best surface ship (from the entire surface fleet of 60-plus vessels) in the Fleet Efficiency Awards.

Both gongs come on the back of a nine-month stint in the Gulf working with Allied nations, in particular an American carrier battle group.

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# Sand and deliver

## WHAT Royal Marines invasion?

A couple stroll along the sands at Pentewan, near Mevagissey, while commandos rumble ashore in trucks.

After a winter break, amphibious operations are back on for the Navy's 'sea soldiers' – and the machines which carry them into battle.

The green berets and amphibious assault ship HMS Bulwark are warming up for a major Anglo-French exercise in the Bristol Channel and Irish Sea by learning and re-learning the basics of putting troops and their equipment ashore.

As the nation's on-call assault ship, Devonport-based Bulwark needs to be ready for operations at all times, and constant training plays a vital role in honing the skills of experienced personnel and preparing newer members of the ship's company.

A two-week 'wader', Exercise South West Sword, ran through all the complex elements of a landing, but in slow time.

Making use of the beach at Pentewan (a popular spot for practice invasions thanks to its relative shelter from the elements and the gradient of the sand and shingle), Bulwark disgorged men and vehicles of 42 Commando

from Bickleigh, near Plymouth, from her vehicle dock on to shore via landing craft (large enough to carry Challenge 2 tanks).

And at the same time, Merlin helicopters from 846 Naval Air Squadron, Wildcats from 847 Naval Air Squadron (both based in RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset) and RAF Chinooks from 27 Squadron (based at RAF Odiham, Hampshire) were busy practising operating to and from Bulwark's large flight deck.

It's the first time the battlefield version of the Merlin, the Mk3, has flown on to Bulwark – whose deck was throbbing to the sound of their submarine-hunting versions 12 months ago during the mission to rescue migrants in the Mediterranean.

The green battlefield version replaces the veteran Sea Kings, which bowed out of service last month; two Mk4s from 848 NAS became the very last Junglie Sea Kings to touch down on the deck of any RN warship, completing a story which began on the previous Bulwark (the Rusty B) – she conducted inaugural trials with the then-new helicopter back in January 1980.

"We had a fantastic couple of weeks of training and it's been great to see both the first Bulwark deck landing of a Junglie Merlin



Picture: PO(Phot) Dave Gallagher, 3 Cdo Bde

and a real honour to help say goodbye to the Junglie Sea King," said Air Traffic Control Officer Lt Steph McInnes.

In all, 250 day and night deck landings were safely carried out by Wildcat, Merlin and Chinook helicopters, not to mention plenty of Royal Marines action with

men and machines landed on Cornish beaches in preparation for this month's large scale Anglo-French Exercise Griffin Strike – testing the abilities of both nations to jointly respond to an international crisis.

"Intensive amphibious training of this nature is vital to ensure we

are ready to respond when the government requires Bulwark to act," said Commanding Officer Capt James Parkin.

"South West Sword was excellent as the maritime, air and land parts of amphibious operations came together for the first time this year."



## Ramsey EASZ into new role

HOW DO YOU like your helicopter? Medium, well done or extra crispy?

We think this one is probably past saving.... but the lads of HMS Ramsey will give it a go anyway.

This was the baptism of fire (literally) facing the crew of the minehunter as they knuckled down to business with a German-led NATO task group.

The international force, which patrols the waters of northern Europe carrying out a mixture of present-day minehunting exercises and dealing with unexploded ordnance from last century's conflicts, spent a fortnight being tested to the limit at the German Navy's naval warfare school.

It's fairly common for German ships to receive such instruction at the hands of the Royal Navy, courtesy of two months of combat training at FOST in Plymouth.

But only very occasionally to British warships do the same at the *Einsatzausbildungszentrum Schadensabwehr* (Combat Training Centre for Damage Control or EASZ) in the picture-postcard town of Neustadt, about 30 miles southeast of Kiel.

The centre features a sinking ship simulator on land, a fire-fighting training complex – both similar to those in Portsmouth and Torpoint – and the former frigate Köln which is set on fire and partially flooded for sailors to deal with.

German instructors set a mock-up helicopter ablaze for the Ramsey sailors to

extinguish and had damage control teams hammering blocks of wood into holes in the hull of the training simulator – a proven method which saved HMS Nottingham from sinking when she was holed in Australia in 2002.

"It was incredible to be able to train with real fires – the facilities at Neustadt are just as impressive as those we have back in the UK," said 27-year-old ET(ME) David Hedley.

"I was surprised by how similar some of our techniques are – but at the same time, it's the little differences that are important. Getting to work with the German Navy like this really helps me understand how they work."

After a week in Neustadt, the training shifted to the Baltic with many of the same drills – minus the real fires and floods – plus air attacks and engine breakdowns closing with the rescue of a stricken merchant ship with casualties on board which had to be saved by the combined efforts of the minehunter force.

The group's spell in the Baltic has allowed time to visit famous cities such as Copenhagen and Lübeck, as well as tiny ports like Neustadt and Rønne on the small Danish island of Bornholm.

After cutting back to the North Sea through the Kiel Canal, the German-led group paid a short visit to Amsterdam before heading out again – and into Storm Jack, which took the force of German, British and Belgian minehunters close to their operating limit.



## Cayman? It's grand (but not all the time)

YOU can't beat a jolly cruise around the Caribbean.

But enough of HMS Mersey and her deployment, let's talk about the 86,000-tonne MS Eurodam, her 11 passenger decks, 2,000-plus passengers, two dining rooms, casino, three swimming pools, sauna and a gym...

Neither vessel found it easy getting into George Town on Grand Cayman, for bad weather thwarted the first attempt with high winds and rough seas battering the British overseas territory.

When the weather finally abated Mersey took full advantage of her shallow draught to come alongside in the Cayman capital, proving a top attraction for visiting cruise liners like the Eurodam and locals; most visiting RN vessels have to secure to buoys out of the harbour.

Caymanians are very proud of their links to the UK and the Royal Navy and took advantage of the ship being alongside to attend an evening reception and capability demonstration.

Governor Helen Kilpatrick was guest of honour, with the Deputy Premier Moses Kirkconnell and Chief Justice Charles Quinn invited aboard along with representatives from Cayman Islands Hazard Management, who run the islands' response to any natural disasters; it's one of Mersey's tasks to provide assistance should the Caymans, or other territories in the region, suffer storm damage.

Mersey's Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Richard Hewitt, held a captain's lunch party with the governor to honour civil servants from the islands who'd played a major part in improving local communities, whilst five groups of schoolchildren were given tours of the patrol ship.

Mersey's busy programme continued with a visit from the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service and their interceptor boat MV Guardian.

Senior Engineering Officer Lt Cam Hunter and Gunnery Officer Lt Will Dewing hosted police officers for training and briefings in engineering and boarding operations.

Five members of the ship's company assisted with a community project at the Sunrise Centre, a school for adults with learning difficulties.

The sailors, led by Sub Lt George Cooke, helped to build raised vegetable beds and plots for the school, encouraging their pupils to become active and self sufficient whilst hopefully selling for a small profit and to support local communities with healthy produce.

"It was great to get ashore and help out such a worthwhile cause, we'd like to thank all at the Sunrise Centre for such a warm welcome."

As with her entrance, so with her exit. Deteriorating weather meant Mersey had to depart Grand Cayman earlier than expected to continue her operational programme in the Caribbean.

## Dhabi day for Bangor and Middleton

HMS Middleton and Bangor left their base in Bahrain for the 300-mile hop to Mina Zayed – Abu Dhabi's main port – to practise alongside comrades from the UAE.

The UAE operate a couple of German-built minehunters; one, the Al Hasbah, hosted the British sailors in port, while the other, Al Murjan, joined the two RN vessels for a short combined exercise. Sailors from both sides traded places with their opposite numbers for unique insights into how the other works.

"Working with the UAE sailors was very rewarding," said Lt Rupert Forde. "We achieved good hunting training and made some good friends who also share our unique world of small ships and mine warfare."

The three ships carried out various manoeuvres in formation before drill mines were laid and the hunt was on.

"Diving is always for real so the job varies with the sea state and tide," said AB(D) Bradley Chapman. "Visibility also affects our work so you have to be really switched on all the time."

Lt Cdr Tom Weaver, Bangor's Commanding Officer, said both he and his counterpart in charge of Middleton, Lt Cdr 'Milly' Ingham, had "thoroughly enjoyed working side-by-side with Al Murjan and Al Hasbah."

"We look forward to training with them again during the international mine exercise – and in the meantime if we see them out on patrol, they might find us manoeuvring close enough for a cheery wave."

Both navies will be taking part in the world's biggest test of mine warfare forces, International Mine Countermeasures Exercise, later this year.

## Saintly act saves sailors

TWO Pakistani sailors were saved from their stricken dhow by the crew of HMS St Albans in the middle of the Gulf of Oman.

Engineers from the frigate tried to fix the motor on the small craft, but with water pouring into the dhow through holes in the hull and the bilge pumps out of action, it quickly became clear to PO(ETME)s Bethany Burton and Ryan Gooderham, sent across in one of the frigate's sea boats, that the vessel could not be saved.

It could not be left in the middle of the ocean for other shipping to run into either, so the two senior rates set about scuttling the dhow, while the boat's two crew were looked after aboard the Saint.

The dhow's crew were subsequently transferred to a Pakistani patrol craft so they could be repatriated, while St Albans returned closer to the Omani coast to take part in multi-national naval exercises.

## Sparkling in Norway

HMS Diamond took a break from intensive training in the Channel to spend five days in the Norwegian port of Stavanger.

Various winter sports were laid on for the destroyer's ship's company, while there was the solemn duty of laying a wreath at Egersund churchyard where five Britons killed at Jutland were buried when their bodies washed up on the Norwegian coast.

The Type 45 departed the port carrying gifts for her affiliated city Aberdeen – which is twinned with Stavanger.





● Lt Cdr Gray also flew the T-38 Talon

# Nathan's got The R

## Royal Navy test pilot follows in footsteps of

**HE completed a supersonic flight over the Mojave Desert in California, where Chuck Yeager became the first pilot to fly faster than the speed of sound in level flight.**

He has flown the Soviet MiG-15 fighter, the aircraft that took the life of the first man in space, Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin.

He has flown the jet fighters the F-15 Strike Eagle, the F-16 Fighting Falcon and the F-18 Super Hornet.

He spent ten years as a frontline Harrier pilot, completing numerous tours and earning a Mention in Despatches for bravery during combat operations in 2008.

Now Lt Cdr Nathan Gray has the accolade of being named Outstanding Graduate at the highly prestigious United States Navy Test Pilot School.

If he were an American citizen he would be looking forward to applying for the NASA programme and a new career as an astronaut.

But the Royal Navy pilot is now helping to deliver the F-35B Lightning II jet fighter to the Fleet Air Arm and the nation's two new aircraft carriers.

"Combining one of the world's most advanced fifth generation aircraft with the world's only purpose-built fifth generation carriers is a thoroughly exciting prospect," he said.

For the next three years the Royal Navy's F-35 Developmental Test Pilot will be embedded with the Joint Strike Fighter Integrated Test Force

at the US Navy's air test and evaluation squadron VX-23 at Patuxent River in Maryland.

It's been quite a journey for Lt Cdr Gray, who joined the Royal Navy in 1998 after graduating from Manchester University with an honours degree in Aerospace Engineering.

In 2008 the then lieutenant was Mentioned in Despatches for "superior skill and ice-calm leadership under the most testing of airborne conditions" while on combat operations.

Following the retirement of the Harrier, Lt Cdr Gray continued flying as an exchange officer on the Harrier AV-8B within the United States Marine Corps, where he was awarded the United States Meritorious Service Medal.

He dedicated his final Harrier flight, in August 2010 at MCAS Cherry Point in North Carolina, to his former instructor Lt Cdr Jak London, the Navy's most distinguished Sea Harrier pilot. In 2002 the pair were in a two-seater Harrier T8 when it suffered a catastrophic malfunction. Both men ejected but tragically Lt Cdr London suffered fatal injuries.

As a Qualified Flying Instructor on both the Harrier and Tucano, Lt Cdr Gray was able to reinvest both his knowledge and experience back into Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, and USMC fast jet aviation.

Career-broadening ground appointments provided a unique opportunity to qualify and undertake duties as a Commando, Paratrooper and

Forward Air Controller.

The 39-year-old completed an appointment as the RN Fixed Wing Deputy Force Commander at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall prior to commencing test pilot training with the United States Navy in 2014.

Applying to become a UK military test pilot begins with a Command-endorsed application to the Empire Test Pilots' School (ETPS) in Wiltshire.

Potential students are then invited to ETPS at MOD Boscombe Down for a two-day interview process, which includes an examination in mathematics and calculus, a technical interview board, and a professional interview with senior members of the testing community.

Successful applicants are then allocated a place on the ETPS Test Pilot course

which convenes every 12 months.

Occasionally there is an opportunity to recommend students for Test Pilot training overseas at one of three sister military Test Pilot Schools (TPS) under a reciprocal exchange program: EPNER in France or US Air Force and Navy in the United States.

The latter is located at NAS Patuxent River, better known as Pax River, the home of US Naval Aviation Developmental Testing.

Of the highly-motivated graduates to successfully complete USNTPS, many have gone on to join the NASA Astronaut Corps.

Lt Cdr Gray was selected for Test Pilot (TP) training at USNTPS where he flew 21 different aircraft types over a 15-month period, learning the unique Developmental Test (DT) skills required of a test pilot to meticulously plan, brief, execute, and report on core



● Lt Cdr Gray is part of the team delivering the F-35B Lightning II stealth fighter to the Fleet Air Arm and RAF

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# Right Stuff of Yeager and Gagarin

aspects of flight that may never have been explored before.

USNTPS Class 148 included 35 flight test professionals from both US and foreign military and civilian fields with a mixed class of experienced fixed-wing and rotary-wing pilots, weapon systems officers, engineers, and even a rocket scientist.

As well as taking the controls of the F-15, F-16, F-18 and MiG, Lt Cdr Gray also flew (*take a deep breath*) the T-38 Talon, T-6B Texan, B-25 Mitchell, T-28 Trojan trainer, the U-1, which is the oldest flying US military aircraft, the U-6 Beaver, Learjet, numerous gliders, U-72 and Blackhawk helicopters and the HU-16 Albatross flying boat.

Lt Cdr Gray said: "One of my highlights was taking off from Las Vegas in the HU-16 Albatross flying boat, circling the Hoover Dam, and landing on the water before shutting down and diving in for a quick swim."

While at Edwards Air Force Base in California, he was chosen to practise numerous NASA

Space Shuttle recoveries in the T-38C Talon. "An eye-opening and incredibly interesting experience," he said.

During his time out west he attended the Society of Experimental Test Pilot symposium in Los Angeles and visited a number of NASA sites, aviation museums and Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic company in Mojave, giving him and fellow students some invaluable exposure to cutting-edge technology.

Lt Cdr Gray graduated top of his class and also won the much-coveted USNTPS Best Development Test II award for his final project evaluating the USAF F-15E Strike Eagle.

"Some of my personal highlights include testing the departure resistance of the F-18 Hornet, which is out of the normal flight clearance for F-18 operations," he said.

"It was memorable to wait to take off in an F-18 Hornet with an F-35B, F-35C and an X-47 unmanned combat aircraft ahead of me also waiting to take off."

Lt Cdr Gray is relishing his role at Pax River.

"Returning our essential carrier strike capability back to the UK government and seeing this amazing project through to delivery is something we will all be enormously proud of."

"With our UK Lightning II jets embarked in the Royal Navy's new Queen Elizabeth-class carriers we have a potent carrier strike capability that puts the UK right back at the forefront of big carrier aviation."



● Clockwise from above: Lt Cdr Gray flew the B-25 Mitchell Bomber, the Soviet-made MiG-15, the F-16 Fighting Falcon and the F-15E Strike Eagle



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# Maya the force be with you

## LIMA in Peru?

Paddington Bear's supposed hometown was the first place that sprang to mind when the Royal Marines of Lima Company found out they were off to the Americas.

But their destination was Central America, rather than Southern, and the country of Belize.

With one foot in the jungle and the other in the Caribbean Sea, Belize is tiny but big on adventure and culture, according to the travel guides.

And so it proved for the men of 42 Cdo as Lima Coy carried out specialist jungle warfare training in the tropical forests, where temperatures at this time of year hit 28°C.

The training, which enabled Lima Coy to prove themselves as the lead standby company for extreme environment combat, also involved the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps and Belizean tracking experts.

At its peak, the exercise featured 163 men – all pictured for the group photograph (above) in front of a Mayan ruin – from across 3 Cdo Bde, including 24 Cdo Engineer Regt, 539 Assault Squadron and 8 (Alma) Commando Battery Royal Artillery.

The trip offered a rare chance for Lima Coy to prove they had what it takes to demonstrate the Royal Marines' ability to move through a crocodile-infested river with only

## Lima Company put to the test in the Belize jungle



their eyeballs and rifle breaching the waterline and to put into practice the jungle theory they were taught – combining basic soldiering with coping with a demanding environment on land and water.

Officer-in-charge of Lima Coy Maj Tom Noble said: "The exercise was a success. The quality of professional soldiering inherently improves in such arduous conditions and the morale gained from a tough few weeks together under the jungle canopy is palpable throughout the

company.

"All in all, the deployment has left Lima Company in the best possible place to take up the mantle of the lead commando group's capability to fight in extreme environments."

The five-week exercise included lessons from jungle warfare instructors in jungle craft, specific tactics and techniques, and even a visit to the zoo to warn them about what unwanted wildlife could potentially make a home in their sleeping bags.



A 130-metre wide river crossing gave commanders a chance to see how long it took the troops to move in large numbers across an obstacle covertly and blend seamlessly back into the jungle.

539 Assault Squadron, the small boat specialists, deployed to a creek area with their inflatable raiding craft on the narrow jungle waterways.

They practised their skills with undercover landings on to densely-vegetated river banks with only the

howler monkeys watching – and howling.

Another of the varied training scenarios took place in the mountainous jungle of a steep gorge with the troops rehearsing what they learned in the UK about personal skills and drills, including putting up a hammock, conducting full wet and dry routine in total darkness, navigating in a disorientating environment and refining weapon drills.

Marines also benefited from local trackers hosting a survival day, which divulged the secrets of shelter-building, water collection, what not to eat or touch and how to trap animals for eating if needed.

From the jungle the marines moved onto a five-day live firing exercise on a purpose-built training area and then practised this in the jungle, where they got the chance to contrast clearing their way through the undergrowth with munitions and with machetes.

With the hard work all but finished the marines turned to playing hard and ended their trip to Belize with a football tournament and water sports.



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A gunboat stands guard close to the tail fin protruding from the shallows of the Kentish Knock in April 1916.

This is the wreck of L-15, the first zeppelin brought down over Britain in the Great War.

Since the beginning of 1915, the giants of the skies had been raiding the British Isles with seeming inviolability, individually, or in packs.

To counter the German air offensive, British air power was directed at the airships' bases in the Low Countries – catching the zeppelins as they took off or returned home.

It paid off when Naval aviator Rex Warneford had earned the VC as the first man to bring down one of the German leviathans in flight in June 15 – but such successes were the exception rather than the rule; the 'zepps' kept coming.

The night of March 31-April 1 1916 was one demanding a maximum effort by the German Naval Air Service. Previous raids had sought to strike at Liverpool, Rosyth dockyard, Tyneside,

Guildford, the Channel ports.

The prize was London. L-15 had already successfully bombed the capital of the British Empire. Tonight she intended to do so again.

Driven along by four 240hp engines, the airship was the technological marvel of the age – as long as a dreadnought but powered through the heavens at heights in excess of 12,000ft at twice the speed of a battleship and capable of dropping up to two tonnes of bombs (high explosive and incendiaries).

L-15 had lifted off from its base in north-west Germany before 11am this Friday and crossed the Suffolk coast at a height of 7,000ft about a dozen miles south of Lowestoft around nine hours later. Her skipper Joachim Breithaupt turned south-west towards the capital passing over Ipswich and Chelmsford – but the zeppelin's presence had not gone unnoticed; fighters were scrambled to intercept.

At least one pilot attempted an intercept, shooting at the airship

when it was caught in the beam of a searchlight. Firing at maximum range, he achieved nothing.

But somewhere over Purfleet, L-15 was caught again by searchlights, lit up "like a great silver pencil in the dark night sky".

In the control gondola, Breithaupt was terrified, for the groping fingers of the searchlights were soon joined by the burst of shrapnel as the men of 3rd Company, Essex and Suffolk Royal Garrison Artillery, opened fire. Almost certainly, Breithaupt's ship was hit by shrapnel – a direct hit from an incendiary shell would have caused the zeppelin to explode mid-air given she carried 32,000 cubic metres of hydrogen which kept her aloft. Whatever struck the zeppelin, four of her 12 hydrogen cells were punctured. She lost one third of her lift – and immediately began to lose altitude.

Breithaupt immediately dumped his payload and set course for the nearest zeppelin bases in Belgium.

Now his crippled airship was

set upon by another foe, a BE2c fighter piloted by 2/Lt Alfred de Bath Brandon, who dropped 'Ranken darts' – 1lb long, thin bombs designed to pierce the canvas skin of a zeppelin and then detonate.

None hit, but it didn't matter for nothing could save L-15. Standing guard in the Thames Estuary this night was the armed trawler HMS Olivine, which intercepted a terse radio signal: *Look out for damaged zeppelin flying low.*

They did not have to wait long, for around 11pm the 'spine' of the zeppelin could no longer withstand the strains and stresses caused by the loss of four hydrogen cells and broke a couple of thousand feet over the Thames Estuary.

Amazingly, all but one of the 17 crew survived; the radioman drowned while trying to destroy the log and coding books.

His shipmates were picked up by Olivine about four hours later – the sailors found the airship crew

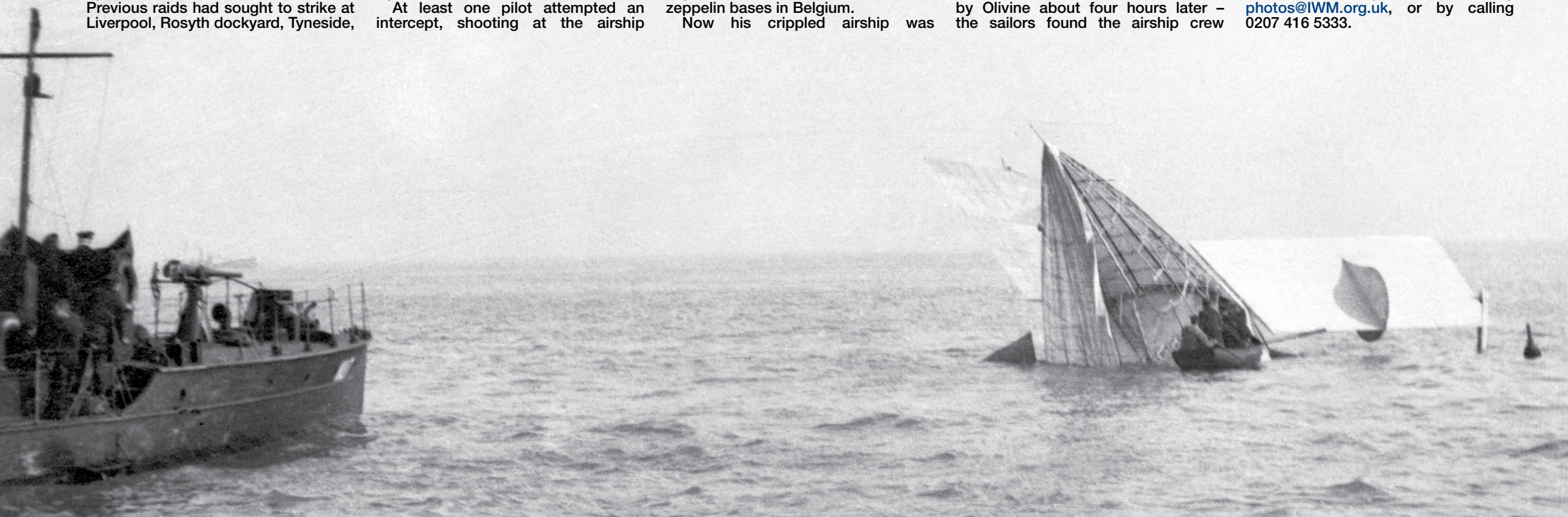
standing on top of the outer casing – then transferred to destroyer HMS Vulture, who delivered the prisoners to Chatham – and international media interest.

Such was the spell cast by the airships that initial news of L-15's demise was treated as an April Fool's Day joke – especially in London.

Not one zeppelin reached the capital on March 31-April 1 1916, but it did not make the night any less bloody. The Germans scattered their bombs around East Coast counties, leaving 48 souls dead and 64 wounded.

Commemorative medals were presented to the anti-aircraft gunners who fatally wounded L-15, but efforts to salvage the airship failed. She sank under tow off Margate.

■ This photograph (HU 128827) is one of more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at [www.iwmcollections.org.uk](http://www.iwmcollections.org.uk), emailing [photos@iwm.org.uk](mailto:photos@iwm.org.uk), or by calling 0207 416 5333.



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All responses must be received by  
April 30 2016



# NAVY NEWS

## Readership Survey 2016

### A: We would like to find out a bit about you

Q1: Are you:

- ☐ a: Under 18 ☐ d: 35 - 44 ☐ g: 65 or older  
☐ b: 18 - 24 ☐ e: 45 - 54  
☐ c: 25 - 34 ☐ f: 55 - 64

Q2: Are you:

- ☐ a: Female ☐ b: Male ☐ c: Prefer not to say

Q3: Please tell us which group you belong to:

- ☐ a: RN Regulars ☐ f: Veterans ☐ k: Army Regulars  
☐ b: RM Regulars ☐ g: Sea Cadets ☐ l: RAF Reserves  
☐ c: RFA Regulars ☐ h: Member of public ☐ m: Army Reserves  
☐ d: RN/RM/RFA Reserves ☐ i: Defence Contractor  
☐ e: MOD Civil Servants ☐ j: RAF Regulars

Q4: Please tell us your geographical location:

England

- ☐ a: East Midlands ☐ d: South West ☐ g: North East  
☐ b: London ☐ e: Yorkshire & Humber ☐ h: South East  
☐ c: North West ☐ f: East Anglia ☐ i: West Midlands

Scotland

- ☐ a: Edinburgh, Fife, East ☐ c: South ☐ e: NE, Orkney, Shetland  
☐ b: Highlands & Islands ☐ d: Glasgow, West ☐ f: Tayside, Central

Wales

- ☐ a: North West ☐ c: South East ☐ e: South West  
☐ b: Mid ☐ d: North East

Northern Ireland

Abroad (Please specify)

- ☐ ☐

Q5: Please tell us where you are currently working. (If you are a member of the Armed Forces, please state your unit location).

### B: We would like to have your thoughts on Navy News

Q1: How long have you been reading Navy News:

- ☐ a: 0 - 1 years ☐ b: 1 - 4 years ☐ c: 5 or more years

Q2: How often do you read Navy News:

- ☐ a: Every issue ☐ c: Occasionally  
☐ b: Every other issue ☐ d: Very rarely

Q3: Please rate the sections of the paper you read: 5 = Excellent, 1 = Poor

- |                            | 5                        | 4                        | 3                        | 2                        | 1                        |                          | 5                        | 4                        | 3                        | 2                        | 1                        |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a: News                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | i: RNA / Veterans        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b: Features                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | j: Noticeboard / Deaths  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c: Historical articles     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | k: Letters               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d: Reserves                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | l: Charity               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e: People                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | m: Book Reviews          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f: Internal Comms / 2-6    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | n: Sports                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g: Sea Cadets              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | o: Photographic Memories | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h: Global Map and round-up | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |

Q4: On average, how long do you spend each month reading Navy News:

- ☐ a: Up to 15 minutes ☐ c: Up to 3 hours  
☐ b: Up to 1 hour ☐ d: Over 3 hours

Q5: Where do you get your copy of Navy News:

- ☐ a: Subscriber ☐ d: Newsagents / retail outlets ☐ f: Mess / Common rooms  
☐ b: Work / Office  
☐ c: Friend's copy ☐ e: Other - please specify

Q6: Where do you generally read your copy of Navy News:

- ☐ a: In the workplace ☐ d: Welfare facilities ☐ f: Local newsagents  
☐ b: Mess  
☐ c: Home ☐ e: Other - please specify

Q7: How many people are likely to read your copy of Navy News:

- ☐ a: Just me ☐ c: 2 - 3 people ☐ d: More than 3  
☐ b: 1 other person

Q8: How much of Navy News do you read:

- ☐ a: All of it ☐ d: Half ☐ g: Almost nothing  
☐ b: Almost all ☐ e: Just the headlines  
☐ c: More than half ☐ f: Less than half

Q9: Overall, how satisfied are you with Navy News:

- ☐ a: Very satisfied ☐ c: Dissatisfied ☐ e: Neither satisfied / dissatisfied  
☐ b: Satisfied ☐ d: Very dissatisfied

Q10: How satisfied are you with the layout and presentation of Navy News:

- ☐ a: Very satisfied ☐ c: Dissatisfied ☐ e: Neither satisfied / dissatisfied  
☐ b: Satisfied ☐ d: Very dissatisfied

Q11: How satisfied are you with the quality of the writing in Navy News:

- ☐ a: Very satisfied ☐ c: Dissatisfied ☐ e: Neither satisfied / dissatisfied  
☐ b: Satisfied ☐ d: Very dissatisfied

Q12: How satisfied are you with the overall content in Navy News:

- ☐ a: Very satisfied ☐ c: Dissatisfied ☐ e: Neither satisfied / dissatisfied  
☐ b: Satisfied ☐ d: Very dissatisfied

Q13: How would you prefer to access Navy News:

- ☐ a: Online ☐ b: Print ☐ c: Both

Q14: How well does the content of Navy News align with your expectations:

- ☐ a: Exceeds expectations ☐ b: Meets expectations ☐ c: Below expectations

Q15: Do you also follow Navy News online:

- ☐ a: Facebook ☐ b: NN Website ☐ c: Twitter  
☐ d: Do not follow online

Q16: In *one word*, please tell us how you would describe Navy News:

Q17: Please provide us with any comments or suggestions to make Navy News better:

### C: What we can do to encourage your readership

Q1: Are you aware of Navy News?

- ☐ a: Yes ☐ b: No

Q2: Please tell us the reasons you don't read or subscribe to Navy News.

- ☐ a: Have not seen it ☐ d: Never heard of it ☐ g: Below expectations  
☐ b: Not interested ☐ e: Too expensive ☐ h: Poor  
☐ c: Content not relevant ☐ f: Other

Q3: What would Navy News need to include in order to encourage your readership?

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● ET(ME) Edward Dean

## It's all about Team ME

TWO Royal Navy Marine Engineers combined know-how and ingenuity to take the prize in an apprentice challenge at their training establishment.

ET(ME)s Edward Dean and Ross Lancaster were part of Team ME, which competed against four other Service and industry teams in the Apprentice category of Operation Antarctica 2016 (see main story, right).

The team created a craft that negotiated foam ice floes in a tank (the 'Weddell Sea'), watched by Lego penguins as well as other competitors.

Edward, who like Ross joined the Royal Navy last year, worked in the finance department of a large water company on the South Coast when he left school, in what he describes as a "nine-to-five job – the same day in, day out."

He said: "I wanted some variation and a job where you expect the unexpected, when anything can happen – I enjoy that challenge."

Edward's brother was in the Navy as an air engineer, and encouraged Edward to think of a career in the Service.

Edward, from Worthing, said: "I found the engineering training hard at first because it wasn't something I had done before, but the instructors are really good and very helpful."

"In my future career, I want as much sea time as possible. One of the things that really appealed to me about the Navy was humanitarian aid. It's something the Navy does really well and I would like to be a part of it."

"The training opens doors – if you stay in, you get the chance to progress in your career and move on, and if you want to go outside, you've got qualifications which make you really employable."

Ross, 19, from Newcastle, said: "I saw the Royal Navy as one of the quickest ways to get a very highly-qualified job and a high level of responsibility at a young age."

He added: "The training they give you has to be a very high standard, because if you're serving in a ship or submarine miles from anywhere you need to be competent and know what you're doing. It's quite a responsibility."

"And when you leave, those skills are really looked up to in the outside world."

Ross has already completed some training in submarine diesel and water purification systems.

His next ambition is to get his nuclear qualification and become a leading hand.



● ET(ME) Ross Lancaster



● Ru Welsman, 15 (left), and Tabi Stonelake, 15, from South Devon UTC's team Arctic Saviour, remove their craft from the Weddell Sea – aka a water tank at HMS Sultan

Pictures: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins

# Engineering success from an icy problem

STUDENTS from across England displayed cool heads when they tackled an icy engineering challenge at HMS Sultan.

Operation Antarctica 2016 was the Royal Navy University Technical College (UTC) Young Engineers Challenge – part of the Royal Navy's drive to nurture engineering and scientific talent amongst British youngsters (see right).

A total of 34 teams took part in the challenge, with some also enjoying a night on board HMS Bristol, the harbour training ship permanently berthed at Whale Island in Portsmouth Harbour.

Themed around the Royal Navy's role of providing disaster relief, students were asked to design a craft capable of negotiating dangerous ice floes and retrieving lost supplies from a mission zone in the Antarctic.

With the event falling on the eve of British Science Week, it was a chance to demonstrate how organisations such as the Royal Navy, UTCs, Young Engineers, Babcock and BAE Systems across the engineering industry are encouraging young people into science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers.

The challenge was hosted in an aircraft hangar normally used by Air Engineer Technicians (AETs) from the Defence College of Technical Training's Royal Naval Air Engineering and Survival Equipment School (RNAESS).

This allowed students, in spare moments, to look at a number of aircraft and enjoy interactive displays around the arena.

The young people were also given tours of marine engineering training facilities used by the Defence School of Marine Engineering (DSMarE), including diesel engines and thunderous gas turbines.

Within a display of industry apprentices up to the age of 25, RN students from the RNAESS and DSMarE and the Weapons Engineering Training Group HMS Collingwood were put up against teams from RAF Cosford and competition sponsor BAE Systems, with Team ME producing



● Group winners HMS Apologies, of South Wiltshire UTC, during one of the heats – from left, Isobel Beaven, Charlie Greenhow, Dan Bavister and Korban Wigham

the most efficient model (see left).

Awards were presented by VIPs for most effective harbour clearance; best design and construction; best presentation; most valiant effort and best theme.

The top 14-16 team was the UTC Sharks from Energy Coast, Cumbria, while the 16-18 winners were HMS Apologies, from South Wiltshire UTC.

UTC Sharks team member Thompson Reed, 15, said: "We have all worked really hard as a team and are really thankful for what we have achieved today, and for the help and time that our teachers have given towards the challenge."

"The Navy helped provide us with all of the things required to get the best possible outcome."

"It's been really fun, and a task like this has been really interesting for everybody."

Graeme Jackson, Lead Engineering Subject teacher at Energy Coast, said: "The students have absolutely loved the challenge."

"Initially starting off quite slowly, they built up some designs, with graduates from Sellafield nuclear plant offering

some advice and support.

"The students then went away and made some CAD images followed by some prototypes they could test, so they've seen designs fail and some really successful models."

"There's quite a lot of pride in seeing all the work that they have put into it and getting something out at the end – it's been a really nice, successful day."

Among the VIPs in attendance were First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas, Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock and Chairman of the Baker Dearing Educational Trust, Lord Baker of Dorking.

Admiral Zambellas said: "Engineers from around the UK are designing, building and operating a new generation of ships, aircraft and submarines for the Royal Navy."

"These are bristling with world-beating technology, to protect our nation's interests against the most advanced threats."

"As we consider exciting developments in areas such as autonomous systems and artificial intelligence, it is even

more clear that the Royal Navy's future is bound tightly to Britain's strength in science, technology and engineering."

"The Royal Navy UTC Engineering Challenge is designed to test the technical ability and creativity of young engineers."

"By working with schools and colleges to nurture their skills and enthusiasm, we can put more young people on the path towards a highly rewarding career in which they can shape the technical future of the Royal Navy and the nation."

Lord Baker said: "I am delighted that so many students from UTCs across the country are competing here in Operation Antarctica."

"The competition offers a wonderful opportunity for students to apply the skills and expertise they learn every day at their UTC."

"Our country needs considerably more engineers and we welcome the support that the Royal Navy is giving to the UTC programme in helping to inspire the next generation."

## A brief guide to UTCs

THE first University Technical College or UTC was established in Staffordshire in 2010 and is sponsored by the well-known construction equipment manufacturer – hence its name, the JCB Academy.

It led the way for a new programme of government-funded secondary schools, all of which are academies but have additional features which distinguish them from other more traditional academies.

Each has a sponsoring university, and they specialise in particular aspects of science and technology, including engineering, manufacturing, product design, digital technology and health sciences.

UTCs are designed to address the UK's need for a workforce with advanced technical skills to develop new products, stretch and reuse existing resources, and meet all the challenges of the future.

Students can join in Year 10 or Year 12, and will combine the study of traditional GCSEs and A Levels with specialist technical qualifications.

By the end of this year it is hoped some 30,000 students will be able to follow this new technical education pathway, educating the inventors, engineers, scientists and technicians of tomorrow.

Each UTC focuses on one or two technical specialisms, working with employers – including the Royal Navy, which is affiliated to six UTCs – and a local university to develop and deliver their curriculum, providing essential academic education and relating this to the technical specialisms.

They have the latest equipment and technology used by industry, and dedicate at least 40 per cent of time to the technical specialism, encouraging students to work in teams and solve problems.

The links with employers and universities means students leave a UTC with experience of the world of higher education and the workplace.

There are now over 40 UTCs in operation, and they are generally smaller than traditional secondary schools, with around 600 students on average.

They are not academically selective and charge no fees, and have catchment areas that may extend across a number of local authorities.

They cover the length and breadth of England, from Plymouth to Newcastle.

A new UTC is due to open in Portsmouth in September next year, and the process of recruiting a principal is under way.

Data returns from the UTC indicate that almost a quarter of students who left UTCs at 18 started apprenticeships – three times the national average.

They are also outperforming the national average for students going on to university – the figure for traditional schools and colleges is 37 per cent, while for UTCs it is 42 per cent.

And the students themselves feel that UTCs offer a valuable alternative – almost nine out of ten feel confident in their ability to succeed in work and about the same number are confident of getting a job that suits their skills when they leave education.

Four out of five students say that going to their UTC was the right choice, and some 70 per cent feel their prospects are better than if they had stayed in a mainstream school.

Almost three quarters of parents of students at UTCs say the establishment has made their child more confident in getting a job, and 85 per cent of parents believe the UTC is preparing their child for the world of work, compared with 68 per cent of parents with children in mainstream schools.



# Second-hand helicopters boost first-aid training

FIRST-aid training at HMS Raleigh just got more realistic thanks to some judicious recycling on a grand scale.

Two decommissioned aircraft – a Sea King and a Lynx – have been delivered to the Royal Navy's School of Maritime Survival at Torpoint.

And their arrival has enabled staff at the school to provide more varied and effective training for Naval personnel and new recruits who come to Cornwall for basic and advanced first-aid training.

The helicopters will be used to test students on the advanced course, simulating a mass-casualty air crash on a ship or during land operations.

They replace an elderly Wessex helicopter, which was built more than 50 years ago, and the first to arrive was the Sea King, delivered from HMS Sultan in Gosport in December.

Welcoming the former Jungle aircraft, WO1 Paul Bell – Officer in Charge of Triumph Squadron, the Maritime Survival school – said: "We've been using the Wessex helicopter for about 12 years and it's now rather old and tired."

"We needed a new airframe to replace it so that we can continue to provide the level of training that we are currently delivering."

"It's very important that we have the assets to allow the students to practice all that we teach them in a realistic scenario."

"The Sea King is a lot bigger than the Wessex, so it will allow us to get more casualties inside, which will in turn allow us to simulate more scenarios than we could before, so the standard of our training will be massively improved."

"For our students, particularly the new recruits, to see this, a modern air-frame at a school delivering up-to-date first aid training, alongside our modern fire-fighting and damage-control simulators, is pretty special."

"The aircraft itself is in fabulous condition and will serve us well for many years to come."

The 29-year-old Sea King saw service in the first Gulf War, while the Mk8 Lynx, which arrived at the end of January, was built in 1980 and served as a ship's flight for destroyers and frigates including HM ships Danae, Beaver, Glasgow, Newcastle, Manchester, Sutherland and Edinburgh.

POMA Holly Frost, the unflatteringly-titled FATO (First Aid Training Officer – she prefers 'Lead Instructor...'), said: "Although it cannot be totally realistic, as we use the aircraft side-by-side, they represent the kind of aircraft trainees would see on a deployed ship or carrying troops."

As she spoke a Level 2 (advanced course) exercise was just about to get under way.

"Remember, no smiling; you are supposed to be injured," PO Frost said to a trainee who on this occasion was playing a casualty – the class is split in half and everyone takes a turn as both a casualty and a first-aider.

The first bucket of blood is sluiced into the belly of the Sea King as the first-aiders approach, prompting a chorus of groans, cries and howls of pain.

"The blood is just water and colourant, but we use the proper casualty simulation stuff," said PO Frost.

"This is the fourth day of their course, and it is the worst day at the office ever – it is as realistic as we can make it, and it gives us the conditions we need to test the



students.

"It is the sort of scenario where a helicopter makes a very heavy landing on a flight deck."

"We call it the Thursday War because there are so many practical exercises on the Thursday of the course."

"It is made to be high-intensity, realistic training, and apart from the real thing it is as realistic as we can get."

"All the students comment favourably on it, but there is an element of pressure as well."

"We can tell they are stressed – they take it seriously."

"It is ramping it up a bit from the theory – all that blood, smoke, and screams."

"The students are all trained ranks, many joining front-line units ready to deploy."

"It is a top-up for some, while others have very little experience at all but will be expected to have first-aid skills when they reach their ship."

"Everyone in the Royal Navy does basic level 1 First Aid, including CPR, how to put a bandage on, dealing with someone who is choking, but a percentage of a ship's company needs to be Level 2 trained."

"There is also a more advanced Level 3, which is taught when they get to their units by medics."

"We get up to 60 trainees a week for Level 1 and up to 20 students on this course, of which there are maybe 30 a year."

"Phase 1, which is to Level 1, is two days, and we train the RNR as well."

"The Level 2 course is four-and-a-half days, and it is for ratings and officers, depending on where they are going and why they need it."

The egalitarian nature of the course is important as students range from novices who have never been to sea through to seasoned officers.

"When on the course, for the sake of training rank disappears," said PO Frost.

"They have all been in the Royal Navy long enough to know what their rank is and have that respect, but for the sake of first aid training we cannot let rank get in the way."

The course, CBRN23, is a challenging combination of classroom theory and practical assessments, though the failure rate is very low – "I can count the number of people who failed to pass in the past year on one hand," said PO Frost.

Some do struggle, however; the

course does cover a wide range, including unconscious casualties, shock, stopping a bleed (including arterial), fractures and burns, and also deals with paperwork – observations and recorded actions are legal documents.

"They will get a debrief after each of the four or so practical exercises, which highlights any struggles and allows them to learn from each other's mistakes," said PO Frost.

"We have an honest and open way of debriefing – it is definitely more mentoring than a directed approach, which would perhaps be better on the firefighting side."

"We do not want the students to be too intimidated to get their hands on casualties."

The First Aid Training Unit has four staff – PO Frost's team currently includes a

Royal Marines corporal and a Royal Navy leading hand, while continuity is provided by former warfare rating Andrew 'Jungle' Jarvis, who was a seamanship instructor at Raleigh (and "worth his weight in gold – he keeps us on track," said PO Frost).

"They are all DTTT – Defence Train The Trainer – so all instruct," she continued.

"For the killick and AB that's great. The AB is a really strong person and she's got real potential."

"To see her take charge of a class of 60 students who will be the same rank as her in two weeks is really quite impressive."

PO Frost has been with the unit for just over a year, and will leave it to take up a place at Dartmouth, having recently passed her Admiralty Interview Board –



● A trainee deals with one of the victims of the air crash during an exercise in the newly-acquired Sea King at HMS Raleigh



● The Sea King fuselage is towed through HMS Raleigh (above left) and craned into place beside the old Wessex at the First Aid Training Unit (above)

Pictures: Dave Sherfield

coincidentally, her counterpart at the Portsmouth unit is on exactly the same career path.

If successful at Britannia Royal Naval College, the pair will take up the role of Medical Services Officers, providing policy, guidance, planning and other managerial skills to the medical branches of the Royal Navy and tri-Service organisations.

PO Frost brings a wealth of experience to the First Aid course; she has deployed in major warships including HMS Ark Royal and Albion, and has deployed with Royal Marines embarked forces in RFA ships, including a stint as section head with medical staff on a Cougar amphibious deployment.

"Most of the time the chefs and stewards on a ship make up the first-aid team, and it is a secondary role for most people on this course," said PO Frost.

"But I and members of my team have seen real casualties – we know how important this is."

Another keen supporter of the course is one of the students,

● Trainees manoeuvre a 'casualty', soaked with simulated blood, away from the wreck of the Sea King during a first aid training exercise. The recently-arrived Lynx stands in the background

Lt Cdr Chris Pate, who is the Commanding Officer of Yorkshire Universities Royal Naval Unit and therefore is required to be trained to Level 2.

"This is the first higher-level first aid I have done, and it's probably something more people should do," said Lt Cdr Pate.

"I think it's a good skill for being in the Royal Navy, but also a good life skill – as I found out last summer."

"I have got a little boy who is now three, but he was two when we were in the Lake District and he banged his head when he fell over."

"I only had my RN Level 1 First Aid skills to rely on. I was going to come on this course anyway – and it would have helped out in that situation."

"We were lucky there was a first responder paramedic close by to help, because we were three miles from the nearest road."

"I had actually already booked on to this course because as a CO I had to do it, but I think people should volunteer to come on it if they can."

"It has been really good and really enjoyable – it is a mixed course, and it has also been an opportunity for all ranks and rates to mix away from their ships, which can only be a good thing."



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# Pilot who changed aviation

## RN planning tribute to Eric Winkle Brown



THE Royal Navy will hold a tribute to the greatest naval aviator in Fleet Air Arm history – and possibly the greatest aviator, period: Capt Eric Melrose Brown CBE DSC AFC – better known as ‘Winkle’ Brown, who died one month after his 97th birthday.

A memorial service is being planned at the home of the Fleet Air Arm at RNAS Yeovilton on July 21.

Paying tribute, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas said: “The Fleet Air Arm may have lost one of its finest and best known pilots, but British aviation has lost something even greater – the most accomplished test pilot of his generation and perhaps of all time, and a huge advocate of military aviation.

“Eric ‘Winkle’ Brown will be remembered forever as the first man to land a jet aircraft on a carrier. But through his own heroic service in the Second World War, and later as an innovator in both technology and skill, he was a practitioner, pioneer and advocate of maritime air power throughout his life.”

No-one has flown more types of aircraft (487) or performed more carrier landings (2,407) than Capt Brown, who met Hermann Goering at the Berlin Olympics in 1936... and then interrogated him after WW2.

The Scotsman flew every major combat aircraft of WW2, including gliders, fighters, bombers, airliners, amphibians, flying boats and helicopters, and his contribution to aviation research covered transonic flight, assessment of German jets and rocket aircraft, rotary wing flight, and the first carrier decklanding of a jet aircraft.

Eric Melrose Brown was born on January 21 1919 in Edinburgh, where he attended the Royal High School and excelled both in the classroom and, despite his pint size, on the sports field. His father, Robert, was a Royal Scot who had transferred to the Royal Flying Corps and then to the RAF when it was formed in 1918.

In 1936 Brown’s father took him to the Olympics in Berlin, where they met Hermann Göring and Ernst Udet, both WW1 fighter



● Eric Winkle Brown giving a talk at the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton in 2014

aces. In 1938 Brown again visited Germany, where he saw a Focke-Wulf 61 helicopter being flown by the aviatrix Hanna Reitsch. Brown was a student teacher at Schule Schloss Salem in Germany when he was woken one morning in 1939 to be told: “Our countries are at war”; he was arrested by the SS and escorted to the Swiss border.

Brown had learnt to fly in the University Air Squadron and on reaching Britain he volunteered for the Fleet Air Arm.

His first operational appointment was 802 NAS, flying the Grumman Martlet from the escort carrier Audacity.

His squadron shot several German long-range bombers and he was awarded the DSC for his bravery and skill.

Audacity was torpedoed and sunk in December 1941: Brown was one of only two survivors among the aircrew.

Brown’s flying ability was so outstanding

that he was sent to the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, to trial the newly-navalised versions of the Hurricane and Spitfire. He also trialled the landing arrangements in new carriers, suffering a rare mishap when in September 1943 he crashed a Fairey Firefly on the deck of the carrier Pretoria Castle.

By December 1943 he had already clocked up some 1,500 deck landings on 22 ships. In 1944 he was appointed MBE for outstanding enterprise and skill in piloting aircraft.

Between 1944 and 1950 Brown was successively chief naval test pilot at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, commanding officer Enemy Aircraft Flight, and commanding officer Aerodynamics Flight, the zenith of experimental test flying. In 1948 Brown was awarded the Boyd Trophy – for the finest feat of aviation during the previous year – for his work on trials of a rubber deck.

Only in 1949 was Temporary Acting Lt Cdr RNVR (Air) Brown granted a permanent commission in the Royal Navy. That year he also suffered one of his rare accidents, when a prototype jet-powered flying-boat fighter, known unaffectionately as the Squirt, struck flotsam in the Solent and sank beneath him.

In the 1950s during the Korean War, Brown was lent to the US Naval Test Centre at Patuxent River, Maryland, where he introduced to the US Navy the then new British concepts of the angled flight deck. It was during this period that he achieved a very large proportion of his world record number of land-ons and take-offs.

Promoted to captain in 1957, Brown served in the Admiralty as deputy director Naval Air Warfare. He retired in 1970.

Brown enjoyed a third career as an aviation author and lecturer and was a much sought-after lecturer on cruise liners.

He married Evelyn (Lynn) Macrory in 1942; she predeceased him in 1998 and he is survived by their son Glenn, and his companion Jean.

■ Eric Winkle Brown, born January 21 1919, died February 21 2016.

● Above and below: Eric Winkle Brown during his flying days

Pictures: Courtesy Imperial War Museum



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# Irene completes her world journey

PIPER Irene Robertson has completed a 50,000-mile journey across seven continents in 50 days, during which she played the bagpipes at some of the world's most iconic locations.

Irene, who raised more than £5,000 for both the RNRMC and Julia's House, gave her final performance of the trip on HMS Belfast in London.

She began her challenge in January onboard HMS Victory and went on to play in the USA, Brazil, Japan, Hong Kong, South Africa and Russia, performing at New York's Radio City Music Hall, San Francisco's Alcatraz, Rio de Janeiro's Christ the Redeemer statue, Antarctica's Paradise Bay and Neko Harbour, on top of Auckland's Sky Tower, onboard Sydney's Captain Cook's Cruise, Tokyo's crowded Shibuya pedestrian crossing, Hong Kong's The Peak, Johannesburg's Regina Mundi Catholic Church and Moscow's Red Square.

"This incredible piping

journey has been out of this world. I feel humbled by the love and understanding that I have been shown along the way," she said.

"The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity make every mile count to support serving and former members and their families.

"I am proud to be a member of The Royal Navy Pipe Band Association and because of this, I see at first hand the brilliant work that they do."

She added: "Julia's House is a children's hospice caring for children with life-limiting illnesses from diagnosis to death and beyond for the whole family.

"As a nurse I understand the dedication and love that is the very soul of this charity."

Irene will continue to fundraise; for more details or to donate, visit: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/bagpipetheworld>



● Irene Robertson completed her world tour with a performance aboard HMS Belfast in London



## Colonel kicks off new challenge for Twickers

PERSONNEL from HMNB Portsmouth took part in the Road to Twickenham challenge for the RNRMC by competing in a "kick to Twickenham" event.

The challenge, organised by LPT Dean Fentum, pictured below, was to kick rugby balls 70.4 miles, the equivalent distance from the naval base to Twickenham.

This meant a total of 5,450 kicks over a five-hour period.

The first kick was made by Col Mike Tanner, pictured above, captain of the base and a trustee of RNRMC.

Hilary Jukes, regional fundraising coordinator for the charity, said: "We are delighted that so many people turned out on a wet and windy day to take part."

Participants included personnel from HMS Westminster, HMS Nelson, Porflot Type 23 pool, HMNB Field Gun Crew, Unit Pay Office and the medical centre.



# Beating Retreat top treat

THE Massed Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines will perform their world-famous Beating Retreat on Horseguards Parade in London to mark the birthday of their Captain General, the Duke of Edinburgh.

The event, on May 25 and 26 at 6pm, only takes place every two years and gives the audience the unforgettable chance to see more than 250 of the world's finest and most versatile musicians carry out a magnificent pageant of military music, precision drill and colour in the presence of their royal guests.

One of the highlights of this event will be the breath-taking Drum Display by the world renowned Royal Marines Corps of Drums.

New for 2016 will be a ceremonial drill display from 100 Royal Marines Commandos, one of the world's elite fighting forces, set to the stirring music of the Massed Bands.

The event promises to be truly breathtaking. With the

addition of two giant video screens the audience can get 'up close and personal' with the men and women of the Royal Marines Band Service as they go about their business – a truly unique opportunity.

The evening will conclude with the moving and evocative Naval Sunset Ceremony, which once witnessed in the historic setting of Horse Guards Parade is surely never to be forgotten.

Taking the salute on the first night will be new First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones and on the second night it will be the Duke of Edinburgh.

This most prestigious of events sees all five bands from across the UK coming together to perform a programme of traditional and contemporary music, with all proceeds going to Service charities.

Don't miss this opportunity to witness a fabulous Best of British event in one of the most iconic venues in Great Britain.

Tickets, which are £12.50, £17.50 and £25, are available from [www.rnrmctickets.co.uk](http://www.rnrmctickets.co.uk) or call 02380 170513.



## Bears a necessity

POLAR Bear racing.

Yes you read that correctly. The unusual sporting event took place in HMS Iron Duke as the Type 23 frigate ventured into the Arctic Circle.

As part of Exercise Cold Response in Norwegian waters, Iron Duke was tasked to head north to reset in preparation for the final phase of the exercise.

On completion of the exercise the frigate's Warrant Officers and Chief Petty Officers' Mess hosted a crossing the line "blue nose" ceremony.

The ship was boarded by King Neptune (WO1 Andy Patton) to issue both the ship and her crew with their very

own 'blue noses'.

The ceremony took place on a cold day with all members of the ship's company called to the flight deck to receive an ice-cold soaking by the Polar Bears, a blue nose and a certificate issued by the CO Cdr Ben Aldous.

As the evening drew in, the hangar was transformed into a 'bear pit' racing circuit for a night of polar bear racing.

The ship's company bought their bears and placed their bets on six races, each one sponsored by one of the mess decks.

More than £500 was raised to be divided between the RNRMC, Ickle Pickles, and the ship's welfare fund.



## Fair winds for sailors

A Royal Navy sailor and an MOD worker are hoping for fair winds and tides when they tackle an overnight dinghy sail between two naval bases in aid of the RNRMC.

Leading Seaman Phil Slade and Ministry of Defence employee Mark Belamarich are planning

to sail about 170 miles from Plymouth's Royal Navy and Royal Marines Sail Training Centre Camber on Plymouth Sound to Whale Island in Portsmouth.

To make a donation for the June event visit: [uk.virginmoneygiving.com/camberbosunchallenge](http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/camberbosunchallenge)

uk or at 023 9387 1531

■ THE RNRMC welcomed former WO1 (CS) Bob Field to the team in February.

Bob joined the RNRMC from the Naval Command Headquarters on Whale Island where he ran the Service Fund accounts and joins us to run the payroll-giving accounts.

Over the coming months Bob will work hard to expand the subscriptions to payroll giving whilst helping to convert subscribers of the VSSS to payroll giving.

your VSSS payment to the new payroll-giving scheme which now includes sports insurance.

The RNRMC will do all the work for you, just complete and return a new payroll-giving form (available on the RNRMC website).

If you require any further information, please contact either

Bob Field: [bob.field@rnrmc.org.uk](mailto:bob.field@rnrmc.org.uk) or at 023 9387 1536 or

Dean Rogers: [dean.rogers@rnrmc.org](mailto:dean.rogers@rnrmc.org).

## FUNDRAISER OF THE MONTH



### HMS Montrose

CHEFS and stewards in HMS Montrose raised £500 for the RNRMC by taking donations for the weekly lunches and stand-easy breakfast baps.

Gastronomic highlights included chorizo pasties and a giant white chocolate truffle.

# Help us by joining payroll-giving scheme

ARE you in the Voluntary Sports Subscription Scheme?

The current VSSS scheme stopped for new joiners five years ago. It was a very popular scheme which provided sports insurance when training outside of working hours or playing for your local team or club at the weekend.

We are aiming to have one payroll-giving scheme in the RN and we wish you to convert



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# Path of glory

GO Baz, go.

And keep going. For another 630 miles. Veteran Royal Marines Commando WO Baz Gray intends to break a record and raise £10k for fellow green berets when he takes on one of the most demanding runs in the world.

Baz, who's Regimental Sergeant Major of 30 Commando IX Group based at Stonehouse in Plymouth, aims to complete all 630 miles of the South West Coast Path, which follows the shoreline and cliffs of Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, finally ending in Poole in Dorset, in under ten days – not just beating the existing record (11 days and eight hours) but smashing it.

A veteran of tours of duty with the Corps in Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, Baz is also a seasoned adventurer; he's one of only two men who've successfully re-enacted Shackleton's heroic voyage from Elephant Island to South Georgia.

And he's also a long-time fund-raiser, supporting worthy causes with a 24-hour non-stop skiing marathon in -30°C temperatures, a 1,000-mile roller-ski from John O'Groats to Land's End, and a 176-mile 48-hour non-stop trek on the coast path between Poole and Lymington and back.

The full coast path run/jog/walk is of a different magnitude – and it's not just about distance. He'll be climbing the equivalent of four times the height of Everest as he wends his way around the West Country.

"The terrain is challenging so that sustaining an injury is a risk. One ankle twist could jeopardise the whole thing. So it will be a very tough ten days, averaging 63 miles a day.

"I'm preparing well. I'm running every day, with one long run each weekend. I'll increase that long run between now and the start, with a maximum of 40 miles in a day in my training.

Once the challenge starts, I'll need to take care of my nutrition, strength and my pace.

"It'll be a brisk walk for the most part, with some jogging downhills. I want people to come and join me, so I'll be going at a pace that's doable for most people."

He begins his Solo 630 in Minehead at 10am on Monday April 25 and has set his goal on reaching the end of the path in Poole some time before 10am on Thursday May 5.

Baz is hoping 1,000 members of the public will join him along the way to offer some moral support – his route and stopover details can be found on the Solo 630 Facebook page – and he's hoping they, and you, dip into their pockets to raise money for Royal Marines charities.

In addition, he's hoping his epic journey will highlight the work of the charity The Baton, which raises the awareness of Britain's military and their families, and South West Coast Path Association which maintains the path.

"The Royal Marines have been hit really hard in the past ten to 15 years," said Baz, who leaves the commandos later in 2016 after 26 years' distinguished service.

"I've lost a lot of friends and a lot of friends will need assistance for the rest of their lives.

"We're a small organisation, a small family, and when anyone in that family wants assistance they and their families get it throughout all of their lives as a result of these charities.

"But fundraising isn't always easy, especially when things aren't in the news. We have to keep the fundraising momentum going so that the charities can continue to help everyone that needs support."

Donate using [www.justgiving.com/solo630/](http://www.justgiving.com/solo630/) and follow Baz's progress before and during the trek via [www.facebook.com/solo630](http://www.facebook.com/solo630) and @graybazza1.

## Ladies' night to help domestic violence victims

THE Naval Servicewomen's Network (NSN) is hosting their first charity ladies' night to raise money for RNRMC and the Plymouth Domestic Abusive Service (PDAS).

The event will take place at HMS Drake in the Senior Rates mess on Friday April 15.

Starting at 7.30pm, attendees will be able to enjoy live entertainment, disco, food, beauty stalls and much more.

As part of the night there will also be a couple of inspirational guest speakers who have amazing stories to tell and different perspectives on their lives and

how the military have supported them.

Tickets are £20, which includes a welcome drink, hot buffet and entertainment.

For tickets contact: POPT Danielle Setterfield on 01752 555839 or WO1 Jennifer Morton 01752 811312.



● Charlotte shows her winning design to PO Bryn Phillips

## On track for cash

A PETTY Officer from Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton will be the event organiser for the 2016 Yeovil Marathon.

PO Bryn Phillips, 37, a sub-three-hour marathon runner, organised and co-ordinated Yeovil's first marathon last year, attracting 260 competitors, and raising £3,500.

PO Phillips is hoping this year's challenge, to be held on Sunday June 12, will be bigger and better attracting more runners than last year and raising more money, from an entry fee, for the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) and Yeovilton Military Wives Choir.

The 26 miles consists of a flat fast two-lap course around villages surrounding RNAS Yeovilton from where the race will start and finish.

A competition through the *Western Gazette* newspaper invited schoolchildren to design a medal to present to the marathon participants this year.

PO Phillips was invited to meet the designer of the medal that will be awarded to those who complete the 26-mile challenge.

The winner of the competition to design the Yeovil marathon medal was ten-year-old Charlotte Hill from Ilchester Primary School. Charlotte will now have her design moulded onto the medals and handed out to the competitors when they finish.

For details about the event visit [www.yeoviltomathon.com](http://www.yeoviltomathon.com) or [southernrunningguide.com/race/yeovil-marathon](http://southernrunningguide.com/race/yeovil-marathon)

## Guards are angels for CHAS

MEMBERS of the Ministry of Defence's Guard Service at HM Naval Base Clyde raised thousands of pounds for the Children's Hospice Association Scotland (CHAS).

The Service's Yellow Watch were out and about the military site collecting cash during their annual "bring a pound to work day".

Kind-hearted Naval Base workers dug deep and £2,758.60 was collected for the charity.

Stevie Pursley, one of the Guards who organised the event, said: "We have been raising money for CHAS for a number

of years now at the site and I'm very happy to say that we topped last year's total of £2,200.

"We received a lovely letter from the charity thanking us for all our support over the years so I'd like to pass on that thanks to everyone who got behind the charity and contributed and to Babcock who kick-started us with a £500 donation."

The money will go towards supporting children and families at CHAS' Robin House in Balloch. Opened in 2005, The house offers a purpose-built home from home with accommodation for eight families at any one time.

## It's time to party

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund hosted an event to launch the charity's activity programme in the run up to The Patron's Lunch in June.

The Naval Charities (RNRMC, RNA, RMA, RNOC and ARNO) launched their street parties flyer which will go out to all the Naval community.

They would like to see street parties or Patron's Lunches being held on ships, at Naval Bases,

on submarines, in community centres or just in back gardens to mark the Queen's 90th birthday.

The Naval Charities will be holding their own Patron's Lunch in Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard on Monday May 30.

More than 4,000 people are expected at the event, which will feature a street market, *Heart of Oak* re-enactors and the Big Band of the Royal Marines Association.



● LMA Kirsty Taylor

## Walking in tribute to father

A SAILOR from HMS Sultan took part in a series of memorial walks in order to remember those now lost and raise funds for the charity Marie Curie.

Over the Easter holiday Leading Medical Assistant Kirsty Taylor walked 96 miles across the West Highland way from Milngavie, north of Glasgow to Fort William's Ben Nevis.

On completion she went on to attempt the Three Peaks Challenge of climbing Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon.

Kirsty's inspiration for the walk was her father Ronnie Taylor who passed away from a harsh and traumatic case of colon cancer in March 2006.

Ronnie worked as an engineer for IBM and was a former member of the Territorial Army.

As Kirsty progresses through life and her own military career, she continues to draw inspiration from the loving relationship they shared.

She said: "My dad was always one for encouraging me to go that step further and to remember that the only limits I have are the ones I set for myself."

"I'm sure for the past nine years he has been the most stubborn and ironic angel, laughing at me from above.

"Sadly my daughter, Molly, was born after he died so they never got to meet but I tell her lots of stories of what having my dad around was like for me."

"I really wanted to do something as a tribute in a way that he would truly understand, appreciate and respect.

"I picked the route for many reasons, first and foremost it took me through the beautiful scenery that I shared with my dad growing up and Molly was also able to get involved."

All of the money that Kirsty raises from the walk will go to Marie Curie.

To sponsor Kirsty please visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/Kirsty-Taylor1984/>

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# Cheers to the hero who inspired trek

A HARDY group of Royal Navy personnel trek across the snow in the bid to make camp before the sun sets over the Antarctic.

The intrepid adventurers have completed an arduous journey from Antarctica and crossed South Georgia following in the footsteps of Sir Ernest Shackleton.

The 11 Service participants from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines carried out the six-week expedition a century after Shackleton's extraordinary recovery from the Weddell Sea.

Having left the Falkland Islands, the ten men and one woman sailed a 67ft yacht to King George Island, 75 miles off the coast of Antarctica, before heading further south to the frozen continent.

From there it was up to Elephant Island and eventually to King Haakon Bay, South Georgia, where members of the team began trekking over land to Stromness and eventually to Grytviken where they paid homage to Sir Ernest at his grave.

Antarctic Endurance 16 team leader Cdr Tim Winter, 48, said: "Fittingly, we arrived at Grytviken on Sir Ernest Shackleton's birthday and were joined at the grave by crews from the other yachts in the harbour.

"We had a bottle of Shackleton Whisky with us and so were able to toast the man who inspired the whole plan for Antarctic Endurance 2016."

Sub Lt Emily Kutarski, 29, an engineer, who was the only female on the team, said: "The British Antarctic Survey have turned a shipping container into what must be one of the most scenic saunas in the world.

"I've certainly not been in one before that has a window from which you can see the sea, mountains and glaciers with the occasional penguin or elephant seal waddling or lumbering past respectively at close range."

The aim of the expedition was to inspire a new generation of sailors and marines to seek adventure but also to provide the Navy and Ministry of Defence with research into team dynamics and leadership.

The deputy team leader, Royal Marines Maj Tony Lancashire, 42, who previously sailed through Canada's Northwest Passage in a 17ft boat, added: "What really impressed, and will stay with me the longest, was how well the team rose to meet their own challenges in such hugely demanding conditions.

"I learnt a little more about myself during the last few days but I also learnt that those qualities Shackleton and his men displayed are very much present amongst today's sailors and marines, especially amongst the fine team I shared this experience with."

The 11 Service participants are made up of qualified and experienced sailors and mountaineers, with six of them in the first

five years of their careers.

However for Maj William 'Molly' Macpherson, Antarctic Endurance marked the end of his 36 years' service in the Royal Marines.

The 52-year-old, from the Isle of Wight, said: "Stepping onto the peninsula was a surreal and emotional feeling, truly strange and humbling and a fantastic way to bring to an end my career in the Royal Marines."

Along with research into team dynamics and leadership, data has also been collected on climate, environment and hydrography on behalf of BAS, Cambridge and Plymouth Universities and the UK Hydrographic Office.

The team's final leg of their trek was sailing aboard Xplore back to the Falkland Islands.

Cdr Winter added: "I will be returning home having achieved a dream that has taken four years to come to fruition – this has only been possible through the energy, enthusiasm, hard work and dedication of the AE16 team (quite aside from the patience and sacrifice of friends and families), thus providing me with a unique group of people with whom I will be able to share our experiences and achievements for many years to come.

"Our arrival in Port Stanley signified the end of one particular journey, but, in the words of Sir Ernest Shackleton on watching the Endurance sink below the ice of the Weddell Sea, 'A man must set himself to a new mark directly the old one goes' ... and so a new journey commences."







# Five days to show they're cool enough for phot school. Will they

## ONE sailor.

Two Royal Marines.  
Three inquisitors.  
Four candles (*just checking you're still reading*).

Five days to prove you've got what it takes to land a place at the Defence School of Photography to train to join the Royal Navy Photographic Branch.

That was the scenario facing AB(MW) Tom Rouse, Acting Sgt Mark 'Johnno' Johnson and Mne Mountain Leader Sam Seeley at RAF Cosford on the Photographic Branch Selection Course.

A few days to impress enough to make the sideways move to the photographic specialisation.

And if that wasn't enough pressure, spare a thought for Tom, who flew to the UK from HMS Middleton in the Gulf the weekend before the course started knowing if he failed the fitness test he would be back in Bahrain on Tuesday.

But all three breezed through their fitness tests, meaning they were fit to snap (*geddit?*).

Next their brains were tested as the trio faced literacy, numeracy and photographic knowledge assessments. Finally each delivered a ten-minute presentation on a topic of their choice (*Google water bears, we all want one*) to demonstrate their communication skills.

The reward? At the end of the day each received the photographic equipment they would be using that week.

Day two began back in the classroom with lessons from course leader CPO Rob Harding, the branch's eastern area manager, and L(Phot) Jay Allen on how to use the DSLR camera and kit, aperture, shutters and flash, with a chance to

put the theory to the test in the grounds of the RAF base in Shropshire.

Day three and the trio were set a practical assignment at the nearby RAF Museum. The students had to take photographs of people at work, a portrait, enhanced movement, interior, colour and texture, using flash for at least one of the images, which proved testing as bright winter sun hit the glass-covered museum.

Back at the school and each of their efforts were portrayed on an electronic whiteboard to be critiqued.

Next up was the most testing part of the course. A 24-hour exercise in the Cosford area during which the students were asked to produce ten images – eight demonstrating specific photographic techniques and two of their own choice.

"They need to show that they really want this," said CPO Harding as he and L(Phot) Allen spent much of the evening tracking down the trio to encourage them. It paid off as the students spent time photographing outreach workers handing out hot food and drink to the homeless in sub-zero temperatures.

Two of the students remained out in the early hours and all three were back on the streets for sunrise.

So what made the three want to

join the specialisation?

"I am after a vocation and profession, not just a job," said Johnno, 42, currently working as a chef with 42 Cdo in Plymouth.

"I've always enjoyed photography but it wasn't until I spoke to a phot that I really thought about transferring."

Sam, 25, currently with 30 Cdo Bde, feels the time is right for a change of career.

"I want to join the photographic branch for the high calibre of jobs and equipment you get to do and use," he said.

Tom, 21, said: "I bought a camera when my son Finlay was born two years ago, have done the ship's photography course and would now love to join the photographic branch."

With all three students having chosen their ten images, it was time for the interview panel – a grilling from the Royal Navy's Master Phot WO1 Nathan Dua, CPO Harding and CPO Tam McDonald, the branch's northern area manager.

During this time two tutors from the DSOP, one of the largest photographic schools in Europe, assessed the candidates' chosen images to give an independent opinion to the panel.

Day five and as he waited to hear if he had been successful, Sam,

who joined the Royal Marines five-and-a-half years ago, said: "I love talking to people and to think I could be the only phot on a ship is great. I prefer working in a small team so the Mobile News Team would be ideal."

"The selection course is great, I have learned so much from those with experience and a wealth of knowledge."

For Tom, waiting to find out his fate was doubly agonising. If he failed the course he would be unable to take a week's leave to see his wife Chelsie and their young son at home in Somerset.

Johnno added: "I've learned so much this week. It has opened my eyes and made me realise how much better I can make my photos."

"On Tuesday I was struggling to focus and was starting to think I had made a mistake but I'm so pleased with the progress I have made this week. I have worked really hard."

Success for the candidates means a wait to join the 28-week Tri-Service Professional Photographers Course which, if completed on Civvy Street would take two years.

Graduates work towards an Advanced Apprenticeship in Photo Imaging and also have the chance to join the British Institute of Professional Photography.

Currently on week five of the course are ET Louise George and AB Barry Swainsbury.

"This is the best course I've done," said Louise, 30, who got a taste of life as an RN photographer during her time in HMS Bulwark, with one of her images of the migrant rescues in the Mediterranean making the national newspapers.

"I am learning so much. It is so well organised and I can honestly say that I 100 per cent love it."

AB Swainsbury, 36, who switched to the branch after serving as a steward, agreed: "This course is brilliant. I love learning new things and the teaching here is superb."

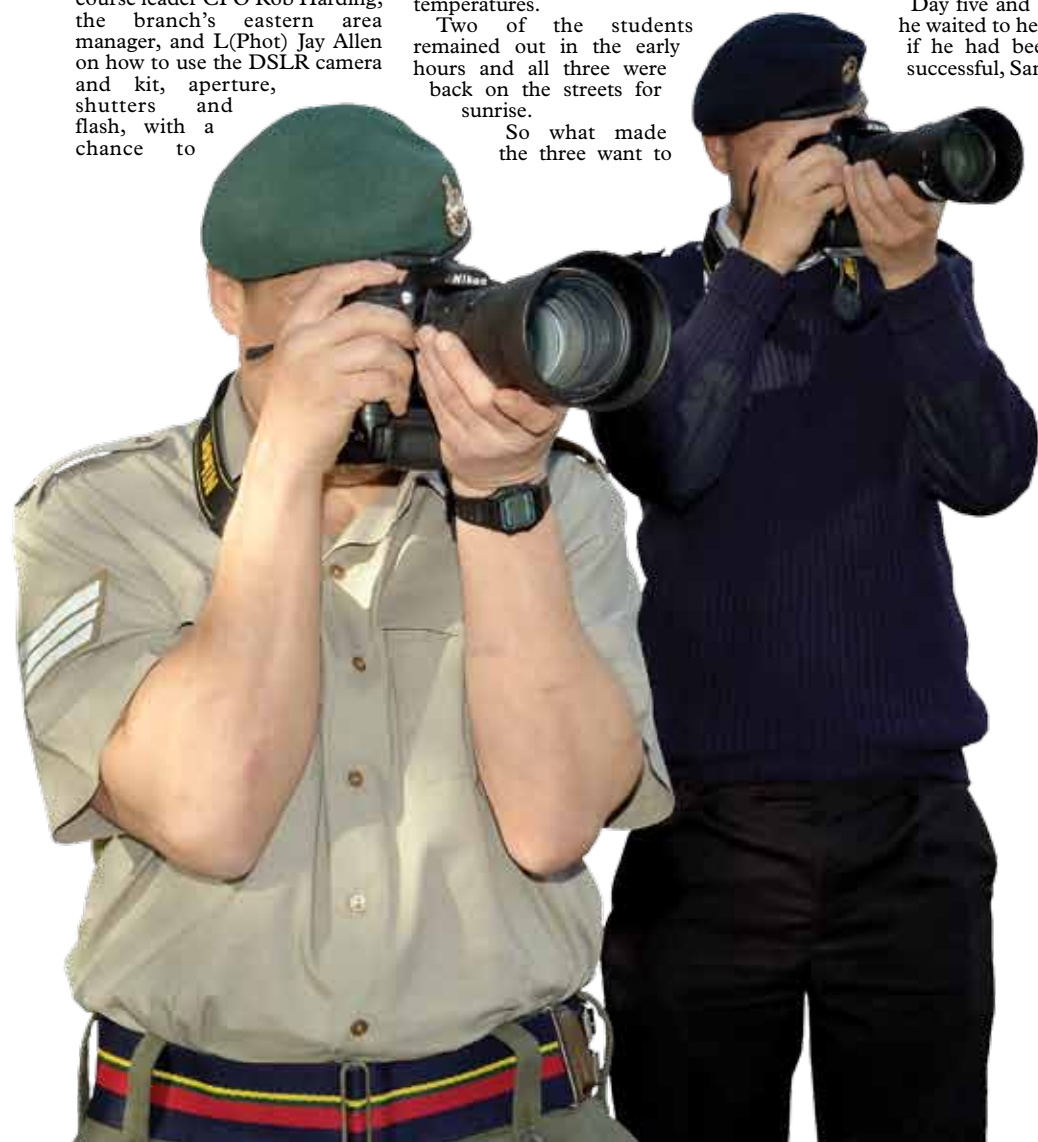
"I can't wait to join the branch as a fully-fledged photographer."

Joining the branch this month are three photographers who graduated from the course at Cosford in February.

Sailor Steve Burke will be heading to Scotland, while Royal Marine Barry Wheeler starts his new career at Devonport and fellow marine Sean Gascoigne heads to Portsmouth.

Hoping to follow next year are the three selection course candidates, all of whom left Cosford beaming as they learned they were made of the right stuff for the photographic branch.

Five intense days  
Three very happy candidates  
One great result.



● All three candidates, from left, Mark Johnson, Tom Rouse and Sam Seeley, passed the selection process and will now wait to be offered a place on the Tri-Service 28-week Professional Photographers Course at RAF Cosford

Pictures: LA(Phot) Jay Allen



IF YOU ARE RECOMMENDED FOR LEADING HAND/CORPORAL AND WANT TO SWITCH TO THE PHOTOGRAPHIC BRANCH READ RNTM 026/16. FOLLOW THE WORK OF THE BRANCH ON FACEBOOK AT ROYAL NAVY PHOTOGRAPHERS





After a week of Arctic travel, the form of the ice doesn't start thinking about a punishing environment.



# Baptism of ice



phibious exercise. It was  
It most definitely wasn't  
Bardufoss in mid-January –  
arrived – it was 15°C below  
high during the day (which  
three hours). By night, it was

not mentioned the snow  
ads.  
light breeze will make it  
trees colder. A gentle-to-  
make the wind chill down to

the hardy fellows (and  
they've grown accustomed  
you can fly in the Arctic, you  
survive in the Arctic (living  
trees, if necessary, clambering  
ice if it breaks, cooking the  
run out of rations).

ctic immersion (literally in  
drill...) the 847 team could  
operating Wildcat in such  
ment.

They brought four helicopters out from  
Yeovilton (a first, as the cats were loaded  
in the back of the RAF's mammoth C-17  
transporters) to Bardufoss Air Base, roughly  
half way between Tromsø and Narvik,  
and a good 170 miles inside the Arctic  
Circle.

The base – Norway's oldest  
operational airfield – is home of two  
front-line Norwegian Air Force  
squadrons, plus its training school.

The wings of the Royal Marines  
have been using the facilities for  
decades, heading to the Arctic each  
winter for their sub-zero training,  
Exercise Clockwork (because it's  
regular as).

"I've been to Norway before but this is my  
first time flying here," explained pilot Lt Alex  
Lovell-Smith. "The challenges are unique:  
the weather can change in an instant, so our  
captaincy and flying skills are always tested."

He and his colleagues run through the  
gamut of military operations from the basics  
of landing in snow – the down-draught from  
the rotor blades throws up a swirling wall of

fine snow – more than 500 times (without  
any damage) to ferrying loads, scouting for  
the troops on the ground, a spot of shooting  
practice for the aircrewman with the  
machine-gun and using the Wildcat  
to direct Allied jets on to targets  
– guiding 20 simulated attacks by  
Norwegian F-16 Fighting Falcons.

The six weeks in Norway  
demonstrated that the helicopters' mottled grey paint scheme is a  
highly-effective camouflage in  
the snow, while crew also learned  
how the MX-15 camera – which  
uses both infra red and electro-  
optic technology – works in such low  
temperatures (for every 1,000ft above  
the ground that Wildcat flies, the temperature  
drops a couple of degrees Celsius) and that  
the helicopter's suite of sensors can not only  
pick out vehicles on the ground at long range,  
but individual troops as well.

And if Bardufoss isn't a long way inside the  
Arctic Circle (it is, trust us), then one 'lucky'  
Wildcat was dispatched to Porsangermoen  
to support Royal Marines mountain leaders

conducting training not 100 miles from the  
North Cape.

"I certainly feel that my aviation skills have  
improved in a way that only Norway can  
provide. Everyone on 847 agrees that Norway  
has given us an excellent opportunity to bond  
as a squadron – and push the Wildcat to its  
limits in this new environment."

By the time 847 left Bardufoss, the days  
had lengthened to offer nine hours of light,  
allowing plenty of flying.

"Maintaining aircraft in this environment  
is no mean feat," explained PO(AET) John  
'Julie' Andrews.

"The guys pushed hard to learn the  
lessons and keep the aircraft on the line. The  
serviceability has been good – that's supported  
a high rate of flying and meant we successfully  
completed our training.

"For many of our more junior engineers,  
this has been their first time in Norway and  
they are all relishing the chance to come back  
again."

Indeed, you can't work for six weeks solidly  
without a bit of a break – skiing, snowboarding,  
dog sledding (each with varying degrees of

skill and panache...).

The squadron worked side-by-side with  
NH-90 (search and rescue/anti-submarine  
duties) and Bell 412 (troop carriers) helicopters  
operated by their hosts, and introduced the  
Norwegians to Wildcat and its stunning 'glass  
cockpit' (ie fully computerised)...

"We came to Norway with definite  
objectives – we've not just hit them, we've  
surpassed them," said Cdr Graeme Spence,  
847's Commanding Officer.

"Wildcat has met the challenge head-on,  
as have our people. Our flying rate has been  
high and we've achieved a lot more than just  
qualifying to operate in the Arctic environment.

"Norway's always been a special place for  
the Commando Helicopter Force – and we've  
made the most of the opportunities to test  
ourselves and our aircraft."

Those tests continue this month as 847 take  
part in a large-scale Anglo-French amphibious  
exercise in the Bristol Channel and Irish Sea,  
Griffin Strike, followed by desert warfare  
training in El Centro in southern California  
later in the year at the other end of the  
temperature gauge.

pictures: po(photo) si ethell, chf



THE  
CREW

LOOK  
AFTER

THE  
SHIP

I LOOK  
AFTER  
THE  
CREW

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LIFE  
WITHOUT  
LIMITS







● Lt Claire Rossiter recently went aboard the USS Harry S Truman as part of her media operations role in the Gulf

# Taking centre stage in the Middle East

**RESERVIST Lt Claire Rossiter, pictured on the flight deck of the US aircraft carrier Harry S Truman in the Gulf, is one of a number of Royal Navy Reservists currently deployed in Bahrain.**

Lt Rossiter, of HMS Flying Fox in Bristol, is a member of the Media Operations branch, and is enjoying the diversity of her work as Assistant Media Officer working for Combined Maritime Forces and the UKMCC.

"Working in such a multinational environment is interesting and brings a whole new set of challenges to the table," said Claire, who has a background in corporate communications, marketing and public relations.

"Media is a diverse role and as a media officer you get to meet loads of different people and end up being involved in all kinds of different projects, both on the CMF side and for UKMCC.

"This can be anything from standard press releases, covering foreign VIP visits, to deck hopping from one ship to another in helicopters as part of an exercise.

"Although languages aren't essential for the job, being fluent in three languages is a massive asset here, and it has served me well, such as during my recent visit to the Charles



● Lt Cdr Jim Martin

de Gaulle."

Lt Rossiter, who joined the RNR in October 2013, was the first RNR officer to attend BRNC with a regular intake, completing her basic training in record time.

Also currently working at CMF is fellow reservist Lt Cdr Jim Martin, of HMS Dalriada in Glasgow.

A member of the Information Operations Branch, his role is to stop individuals involved in terrorism, piracy or armed robbery at sea by using public communications and messaging.

"Every task force comes with different levels of knowledge and experience in IO," he said. "This, coupled with working in a multi-national environment where English is a second language for many, makes the job stimulating and interesting.

"As the only IO specialist for CMF, you just have to get stuck in and think outside the box to overcome challenges. The biggest buzz comes from knowing that you are part of a team supporting many successful CMF operations and have played a part in disrupting those illegal activities."

In his civilian career Lt Cdr Martin works as a science teacher for teenagers with special educational needs.

The Royal Navy provides permanent staff to the CMF, a multi-national naval partnership consisting of 31 nations and 215 personnel with its headquarters in Bahrain. CMF exists to promote security, stability and prosperity across approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters in the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea and western Indian Ocean, an area which encompasses some of the world's most important shipping lanes.

Its aims are to defeat terrorism, prevent piracy, deter illegal trafficking and promote freedom of navigation. The Royal Navy is the second largest contributor of personnel to CMF.



## Dramatic way to greet a visitor

RESERVISTS from HMS King Alfred in Portsmouth provided a dramatic demonstration of their specialist warfare and medical skills to the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, Nigel Atkinson.

The reservists devised an emergency scenario featuring the ship's force protection and medical teams as the first responders.

The Lord Lieutenant witnessed LNN Anya Cooper treating a casualty from the Duty Watch following a realistic simulated injury while both CPO Ken Turley and Lt Cdr Moira Wilcockson provided commentary, explaining how the developing incident had led to an intruder getting on board the training ship HMS Bristol.

Mr Atkinson was impressed by the demonstration, including a search of the compartments and the arrest of the suspect in the ship's control centre.

The Lord Lieutenant undertook a guided tour of the Portsmouth RNR Training Unit, meeting reservists from many branch specialisations, the small team of Royal Navy permanent staff and a number of the new entry recruits during their initial naval training class.

He said: "I am absolutely delighted to have visited

HMS King Alfred on a drill night and have been thoroughly impressed by the professionalism and enthusiasm of everyone I've met."

At Evening Quarters, with the unit mustered into platoons, the Lord Lieutenant presented Volunteer Reservist Service Medals and clasps to a number of reservists and thanked those who were mobilised on operations in support of the London 2012 Olympics.

He presented PO Ian Lane and AB Shaun Chrimes with limited edition Olympic medallions to mark their voluntary participation in the security operations.

HMS King Alfred's Employer Liaison Officer Lt Cdr Paul Wolstencroft and Acting PO Boyd received the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal marking ten years of continuous RNR service, while CPO Swindell received a clasp to his VRSM marking 15 years of loyal service to the RNR Unit.

For those interested in finding out more about a part-time career in support of the Royal Navy the next RNR Live Open Day event takes place on Saturday April 23 from 10am and 3pm.

To register call 03456 00 32 22.



Pictures: LA(Phot) Paul Hall



## Community association hears of Michelle's moving tales

MIDSHIPMAN Michelle Ping, pictured left, talked about her deployment in Afghanistan as a medic to members of Risborough Community Association in Buckinghamshire.

The reservist from HMS King Alfred spoke of the hospital at Camp Bastion, which was the leading hospital in the world for trauma and blast injuries and carried out pioneering work in this field.

Michelle was based at Lashkar Gar, in southern Afghanistan; it was much smaller, with fewer facilities, but the food was very good.

She went out on patrol for a week, carrying equipment weighing 30-40kg and came under fire. At one point she

was trying to look after one man who had been injured and four others with heat illness, in the middle of a firefight.

Mid Ping spoke movingly of the strong bond that develops among comrades in a unit. At the age of 37, she said, she was almost old enough to be the mother of many of the boys.

At the end of her tour she was told: "Your boys have been hit." One corporal had lost both legs and another had lost one leg.

She went to Headley Court, the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre, to see them after her return to UK.

Michelle was awarded the Queen's Volunteer Reserve Medal in 2012 and received a Mention in Dispatches for her courage in saving a soldier's life.

She is also the first rating in the history of the RNR Air Branch to be commissioned from the ranks.

Community Association Chairman Arthur Edwards announced that the afternoon meeting had raised £600, half of which would be donated to Michelle's chosen charity, the Royal British Legion, while the rest would be split between Princes Centre, Thames Valley Air Ambulance and the Risborough Responders in Buckinghamshire.





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## Award for helping to detain man

ROYAL Navy Police Officer John Hewitt has received a Provost Marshal (Navy) commendation for bravery in the face of real adversity during an incident in Plymouth involving a violent male who was drowning.

John, a Leading Regulator based at RN Police HQ (Western), HM Naval Base, Devonport, was working with Devon and Cornwall Police in the early evening when he received a report of a vulnerable man who had jumped into Sutton Harbour. While he was being helped by John and another officer, the man turned violent.

The head of Royal Navy Police, Commander Tony Day, presented the award at the force Western Area HQ in Devonport.

He said John showed great courage and disregard for his own safety: "You placed your own safety at risk in order to safeguard the person you were trying to assist. I am very proud of you. This is exactly the type of response we expect of a Royal Navy Police Officer on duty."

Police were called because there were concerns the man could potentially drown or suffer from hypothermia. Paul helped a police inspector, who was trying to communicate with the man who had been in the water for 30 minutes.

The man was removed from the water and helped onto the pontoon by John and the inspector. Both officers tried to detain the man when he became violent while being helped.

During the incident John was assaulted by the male who spat directly into his face and mouth, but despite this, the officer remained professional and continued to restrain the male, but mindful of the man's welfare at all times. The detainee was handed to the custody of Devon and Cornwall Police.

John, 33, of Plymouth, said: "It is really good to be appreciated for something like this."

## Partnership is profitable

ROYAL Navy Police Officer Luciano Uccella has been presented with an award for his excellence in developing partnerships.

Leading Regulator Uccella was awarded a Provost Marshal (Navy) Commendation at a ceremony in HM Naval Base Devonport, Plymouth.

He has been recognised for excelling in carrying out his role normally performed by a more senior officer, in particular fostering the strong partnership between the Royal Navy Police and Devon and Cornwall Police.

While working as the Acting Regional Intelligence Officer at RN Police Headquarters (Western) in Plymouth Luciano ensured continuity while fulfilling the roles and responsibilities of the senior investigator (intelligence). This post is normally performed by a more senior Master-at-Arms.

# Numbers up for carrier

MEET Number 423.

No, we've not gone all *Prisoner* on you. 19-year-old Peter Rowlands is the 423rd sailor to join the ship's company of Britain's biggest warship HMS Queen Elizabeth.

And that makes him special because it means the aircraft carrier – in the final stages of construction at Rosyth dockyard in Scotland – has more sailors than any other Royal Navy vessel (bigger than flagship helicopter carrier HMS Ocean and assault ship Bulwark – both of whose ship's companies can swell to well over 1,200 when troops and helicopter squadrons are embarked).

Just 11 months after walking through the gates of HMS Raleigh, the teenager joined his first ship as one of its chefs.

The teenager from Sleaford in Lincolnshire – known as Goose by his friends – spent more than three years working in local Indian and Italian restaurants as a waiter and chef before deciding on a more adventurous life.

Peter hails from a military family: his dad Paul served for 26 years in the British Army, his mum Ruth for ten; his sister is in the RAF and his best mate Damon signed up as a soldier six months ago.

After three months of learning the basics of being a sailor, he received eight months of instruction (again at Raleigh) to become a fully-qualified Royal Navy chef.

And one week later he joined the new carrier 400n miles away, and a catering department already 36 men and women strong.

"I was very excited to be drafted to HMS Queen Elizabeth for my first job and I'm looking forward to moving on board and working in the newest and largest galley in the Royal Navy," he said.

When fully crewed up, the chefs will be expected to feed 679 men and women every day – and as many as 1,600 people when squadrons of F-35 Lightning II strike fighters, Merlin and Chinook helicopters and detachments of Royal Marines are embarked.

As of mid-February 2016, there were 48 officers, 128 senior and 247 junior ratings assigned to Queen Elizabeth.

There are already a dozen medics and doctors, 40 air engineers, nearly 100 marine



engineers – responsible for the engines, sewage, water and electrics – and a similar number of weapons engineers, who deal with sensors, computer systems and the carrier's weaponry.

A clubz, Royal Navy policemen and church officer are also part of the Queen Elizabeth team, while the ship's commanding officer and his staff Cdre Jerry Kyd join later this spring.

At present the sailors work in a building close to the 65,000-tonne carrier but later in the year they'll move onboard ahead of HMS Queen Elizabeth going to sea for the first time to carry out initial trials.

## Trio enjoy a reet good ol' natter

THREE Royal Navy officers based at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose in Cornwall are putting their own Yorkshire seal of approval on their Merlin squadron.

The proud Yorkshire trio, Cdr Jon Holroyd, 40, Lt Cdr Earl Kingston, 38, and Lt Jonny Balcum, 33, the squadron's logistics officer, all hail from Huddersfield in West Yorkshire and discovered their home town connection when Cdr Holroyd, the new Commanding Officer, joined 820 NAS earlier this year.

"We've all met up before in the Royal Navy, but not actually in Huddersfield, which is about as land-locked and away from water as you could be, if you don't count the canals," said Lt Cdr Kingston, 820's senior pilot.

"We all went to different schools in the area and have had different career paths so far in the Royal Navy, but Yorkshire roots run deep, even in Cornwall!"

820 NAS are one of the Fleet Air Arm's frontline Merlin Mk2 anti-submarine helicopter squadrons that are at a high readiness for deployments around the world in support of naval operations.

Their aircraft are equipped with some of the most sophisticated sonar equipment in the world, capable of hunting out submarines and monitoring potential aggressors wherever they are.

820 NAS are also well-placed to be the first squadron to join



● Cdr Jon Holroyd, Lt Jonny Balcum and Lt Cdr Earl Kingston with a Giants shirt; Below, a Merlin from 820 with RFA Argus

HMS Queen Elizabeth, the first of the Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers, when she begins trials later this year.

"The Royal Navy is not a usual career choice for people from Huddersfield; my career over the past 15 years has been amazing," said Lt Cdr Kingston.

"Everywhere I've gone my Huddersfield Giants rugby league top has gone with me."

"I've worn it in the Gulf, the Falklands, Australia, off the coast of Somalia when we were chasing pirates, I've even stood on the Great Wall of China with it on; it's been all over the world."

"There's always a little bit of Huddersfield with me."



## Shipwrights go back to yard

FORMER naval craftsmen Bill Visick and Colin Varcoe look at a book they both used while they were shipwright apprentices at Devonport Naval Base.

The duo were among 20 veterans who gathered for a reunion at the Royal Naval Heritage Centre.

The centrepiece of the meeting was a renovated rowing boat they worked on to prove their skills as apprentices.

John Williams, heritage centre volunteer, who organised the reunion, said: "During the cleaning up of an old 10-foot rowing boat by Devonport Naval Heritage Centre volunteers, we realised that it was built by shipwright apprentices in 1965 at the Old Ropery Training Centre."

"We then searched our photographic archives and found many official photos of apprentices building these boats as part of their training during the fifties and sixties."

"The images were collated, put on discs and shown to the former shipwrights on a continuous

display as they gathered to reminisce."

Mr Varcoe, who worked in the drawing office having been an apprentice from 1962, said: "We had the best training available because of the scope and variety."

"We worked in metal and wood and boat building. I was also three years in the machine-shops, the block house, the mast house and the boat house and on ships in refit and in the drawing office. It was the best you could get."

"It's brought it all back to see the wooden rowing boat we worked on as apprentices learning the ropes. I will be keeping in touch now with my old mates from the dockyard."

Mr Visick, 68, said: "This is a fantastic occasion to get together. Most of the people who've come back are old friends and we all have good memories which we are sharing. What we were taught was not only ideal for the Navy, but set you up for anything outside the yard. There was nothing else to compare."



## Engineers help school

SAILORS from HMS Sultan helped out a special needs school which suffered a series of attacks by vandals.

St Francis School at Fareham sustained damage estimated at £15,000 from the attacks.

Air Engineering Technicians spent several days on a number of different maintenance tasks aimed at further enhancing the pupil's experience.

Painting, cleaning and gardening were among the many activities, and additionally the trainees were able to build a new shed within the school's gardens.

AET Matthew Parker, 21, said "One of the jobs that we undertook at the school involved using a pressure washer to get some of the moss removed from

the playground."

"Although this might not sound that interesting, we hope that it made the playground that bit safer and it's rewarding to know that we have made the facility more accessible to the children."

"It's great to be able to help out where there is a real need. It was really sad to hear what the school has been through in recent times. It gives you a really warm feeling to know that you can help make a difference."

Carol Marsh, School Business Manager, said: "We are very grateful to the trainees for offering their support to the school, especially for their input towards revitalising our outdoor facilities."

## Commendation for Adie

GOSPORT Royal Navy engineer Lt Adrian 'Adie' Gibson has been singled out for his outstanding contribution to operations around the globe.

Lt Gibson, who has just left the Royal Navy after more than 30 years' service, was awarded a commendation by the Second Sea Lord – Britain's third most senior sailor.

The 48-year-old engineering officer, who grew up in Oxfordshire and attended Fitzharry School in Abingdon before joining the Navy in 1985, was recognised for his commitment and dedication working at the Fleet Intelligence Centre in HMS Collingwood in Fareham.





## Service marks Gulf War

A NAVAL officer who served during the First Gulf War joined former comrades in London to mark the 25th anniversary of the conflict.

Cdr Neil 'Nobby' Hall is still serving in the Royal Navy, and is based in Portsmouth, but in 1991 he was Operations Officer for Naval Party 1036 and Principal Warfare Officer in RFA Argus.

Argus was given the role of principal casualty receiving ship, but despite being fully prepared with a deployed military hospital unit, she only saw a handful of casualties.

Nobby, who also served in the Falklands Conflict, attended a service at St Paul's Cathedral to mark the 25th anniversary of the campaign which resulted in the liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi forces.

"I feel honoured and proud to have been able to mark the 25th anniversary of this conflict," said Cdr Hall.

"It's important to do this because people died to set others free, and that should never be forgotten."

One of his most vivid memories of Operation Desert Storm was when the leading ships in a convoy were damaged.

"I remember being in line astern of the [cruiser] USS Princeton and [amphibious assault ship] USS Tripoli, when they both hit mines.

"We then had to stop and go sternboard down our own wake to get out of the minefield."

Cdr Hall also remembers smoke from burning oil wells turning the sky black, and seeing missiles flying overhead as anti-aircraft guns attempted to shoot them down.

The First Gulf War was triggered when Saddam Hussein's forces invaded Kuwait on August 2 1990.

A wide coalition formed to liberate the Gulf state, launching Operation Desert Storm on January 17 1991, with the successful 100-hour assault phase ending on February 28 1991.



● Tess Cameron with Cdre Gary Doyle (right)

## Tess finally receives medal

A 92-YEAR-OLD former Leading Wren has finally received her Second World War General Service Medal 70 years on.

Tess Cameron, who served from 1943-46, was presented with the medal at a ceremony hosted by the Sefton Veterans Project in Liverpool.

Bootle-born Tess – who served at nearby HMS Eaglet – said: "It feels good to receive the medal after all this time.

"I am very grateful to the project for making this possible. It is a great organisation and does a lot of excellent work for local veterans."

The presentation was made by Naval Regional Commander for the North of England Cdre Gary Doyle, who said: "I count this as one of the most important parts of my role."

## Change in rules over mesothelioma

VETERANS with mesothelioma caused by their service can now opt for a compensation payment of £140,000 after an extension over eligibility rules was agreed.

On December 16 last year the MOD changed the rules to allow veterans diagnosed with mesothelioma on or after that date to have the choice between a one-off, tax-free lump sum or regular, smaller payments.

The department has now extended the eligibility for the lump sums to those diagnosed before that date.

The War Pensions Scheme is open to veterans diagnosed with diffuse mesothelioma as a result of exposure to asbestos during their military service prior to April 6 2005.

Currently, it provides a War Disablement Pension and supplementary allowances, and a War Widow(er)'s Pension for an eligible partner, which is paid for life.

Mesothelioma is a cancer mainly caused by exposure to asbestos decades before diagnosis, and there is a short life expectancy afterwards.

The changes to the scheme give it similar features to one for civilians and is part of the government's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, which promises fair treatment for those who serve and have served.

Mark Lancaster, the Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans, said: "It is right that we do more to support veterans affected by this condition – it's part of our commitment

to our Armed Forces."

Chris Simpkins, director-general of the Royal British Legion, which led the campaign for an extension, said: "The government has done the right thing and we appreciate the effort that has gone into accommodating the 60 people who were missing out.

"We are grateful to the MOD for taking our campaign seriously and, in doing so, providing a fair result to all those who contracted this terrible terminal cancer in the service of their country."

The MOD's Veterans Welfare Service will contact all existing claimants to explain the new option and help them understand the choices available.

# Band calls round to serenade veteran

WHEN the Royal Marines Band came to town, war veteran Fred Carrington knew he would not be in the audience.

Because 94-year-old Fred, a former Royal Marines Commando, has been confined to his bed for years because of ill-health.

Even so, Fred told his sons that he would have loved to have seen the Portsmouth band perform in Wellingborough.

Fred's son Mike told the local paper, the *Northamptonshire Telegraph*, that his father – a member of the Royal Marines Association – was proud of his links with the Corps, but thought that it would just be an opportunity missed.

But all that changed when the band heard about Fred, who joined the Royal Marines in 1941

and served in Africa and Europe as part of 43 Cdo Royal Marines.

A small team of buglers left their concert rehearsals early to pay a visit to Fred.

And the four musicians performed a fanfare outside Fred's window before being invited in to meet him.

Fred told the *Telegraph* that he had had a lucky escape on the Isle of Wight during the war after a billet he had left that morning was hit by a German bomb, killing four of those inside.

He also said he was preparing to go to the Far East to fight the Japanese until the dropping of the atomic bombs, but then was badly injured in an accident and spent years in hospital.

Before they left the buglers gave Fred a CD of music by the Royal Marines Band.



Picture: Northamptonshire Telegraph

## Ozzie's name added to memorial

IN SEPTEMBER 2015, Kevin Hackett, the North Wales representative of the Type 42 Destroyer Association, became aware of the plight of David Osborne's family.

David, or Ozzie as he was known to his shipmates, was a chef in HMS Sheffield, and was one of 20 sailors who died on May 4 1982 when the ship was struck by an Argentine Exocet missile off the Falklands.

With the fire main severed, the ship burnt for six days until she sank, under tow, on May 10

For 33 years Ozzie's mother Joyce and other family members have attempted to have Ozzie's name added to the war memorial in his home town of Old Colwyn, Conwy, North Wales.

Kevin said such requests had always been declined by the relevant authorities, so contact was made with the Type 42 Destroyer Association and other veterans' organisations.

Using social media sites, an online petition was organised,

and media outlets such as the *Daily Post* in North Wales were approached in the hope of gaining wider support.

The petition was successful, and the decision of the various authorities was overturned in October.

But that was not the end of the matter.

The T42 Association and veterans groups then set about raising the funds to pay for the bronze plaque bearing Ozzie's name to be manufactured and fitted to the memorial – and they set themselves a particularly tight target.

But the initiative was completed in 48 hours, with donations again coming from all branches of the Armed Forces, both serving and veteran.

The manufacture and fitting

of the plaque has now been completed, and an official unveiling ceremony will take place on Saturday May 7 2016, at 11am, in the presence of Joyce Osborne – something she never thought she would live to see.

Also present will be Rear Admiral Phillip Wilcocks, President of the Type 42 Association, other family members, the local mayor and other dignitaries.

Kevin has extended an open invitation to all members of the Royal Navy – serving and veterans – to attend and honour a fallen shipmate, 34 years and three days after his loss.

There will also be an open welcome to the ex-Servicemen's club in Llandudno that evening.

● <http://type42association.co.uk/>



● John Alderson, General Manager of the Royal Maritime Club

## Club has reached the stars

THE Royal Maritime Club in Portsmouth reached for the stars – and achieved its target.

Former sailors will remember the Queen Street establishment as the Royal Sailor's Home Club, providing a convivial watering hole for matelots and dockies.

It also provided a comfortable bed for the night.

A few years ago, reflecting the changing needs of its members and the importance of bringing tourism to the historic dockyard, a remodelling of the club was considered.

The club needed a new image but still had to fulfil its charitable duties, so the Royal Maritime Club was launched.

The result is a popular venue for events including reunion lunches and banquets, wedding receptions and Christmas functions.

Revenue from these events and the provision of accommodation fund the charity, with many deserving causes associated with HM Forces benefiting.

General Manager John Alderson, an experienced hotelier, set himself the target of bringing the club's facilities up to three-star standard.

Pitfalls along the way included the 1950s structure, plumbing and wiring.

But with the backing of the Board of Trustees, John's departmental heads and their teams set about the task of a major refurbishment, which included better access for those with restricted mobility.

Now the club is proud to have been granted a Three-Star Hotel accreditation by Visit England.

● [www.royalmaritimeclub.co.uk](http://www.royalmaritimeclub.co.uk)

## Circular switch

THE March edition of the *Semaphore Circular* is the penultimate fully-printed hard copy version of the publication.

And HQ staff have urged shipmates to get in touch as soon as possible to let them know if you think you will have any problems with managing the Circular by email or website download.

HQ will continue printing for the few remaining branches that don't have an email contact.

And Association officials have passed on a big thank-you to those branches who have sorted arrangements for the future.

If printing costs are too much for a branch, remember that the Club and Branch support fund is there to help – your NCM or Area Secretary can advise you how to apply.

## French honour

BUDE branch president S/M Alan Litchfield, together with 20 other recipients, travelled to County Hall in Truro for the presentation of the French *Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur* award.

Supported by his family and four oppos from the branch, Alan was presented with his medal by French Honorary Consul Alain Sibirl.

Following official photographs, all present were invited to share in 'tea and stickies'.

Then it was a swift return to Bude in order to attend the branch monthly meeting.



● Mark Capelle sent us this photo of the crew from MTB741 dated on the back as taken in 1945. His father, Robert Capelle, who is now 92, is second from the right on the back row. He was possibly based at Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. His recollections and memory are now a bit patchy, but his record indicates he served in HMS Glendower, Valkyrie, Mercury, Attack, Midge and MTB630. Are any of his pals still around? Contact Mark on [capelle2@yahoo.com](mailto:capelle2@yahoo.com)





● S/M Malcolm Sutcliffe

## Reward for Malcolm

RNA LIFE Member S/M Malcolm Sutcliffe has been presented with his French *Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur* – the Legion of Honour – at his home in Ripon.

Malcolm now lives at the Royal British Legion Residential Home, Lister House, where Jeremy Burton, the French Consul (Leeds), presented the medal at a special ceremony.

Members of Malcolm's family attended the event, along with Harrogate Royal Naval Veterans and ex-Service residents of Lister House.

Malcolm, who is 92, served in HMS Bleasdale as a Telegraphist during the Normandy Landings on D-Day, while his escort destroyer provided gunfire support for the assault on Juno beach.

Harrogate & District branch, of which Malcolm was a member, has now disbanded but some of the branch members have transferred to RNA HQ Roll and now meet, informally, as the Harrogate Royal Naval Veterans.

## Venue change

LUTON branch have changed their meeting venue – they have now moved back to Royal British Legion in Marsh Road, Leagrave, Luton.

Branch meetings are still held on the same days – the first and third Wednesdays at 20.00.

# Battleship returns in scaled-down form

**BATTLESHIP** HMS Warspite has returned to her roots – in the shape of a model that took longer to build than the career of her real-life counterpart.

Warspite, a Queen Elizabeth-class warship, was laid down in October 1912 at Devonport Royal Dockyard, and commissioned in March 1915.

She took part in the Battle of Jutland, and during World War 2 completed a tally of battle honours unsurpassed by any single Royal Navy ship.

The battle-scarred veteran was struck in 1947 after an action-packed 30-year career.

The Warspite which has returned to Devonport is a lot smaller – it fits neatly onto a table at the base's Naval Heritage Centre.

This battleship is a gold medal-winning model by Cornishman David Brown, who has created miniature versions of Royal Navy ships since childhood.

Earlier examples include destroyers HMS Javelin and Kelly, and he has also made a working model of wartime cruiser HMS Sheffield, which was given to the Fulham Sea Scouts.

There he met a retired Royal Navy chief petty officer, who suggested that he might like to try his hand at something more challenging – the Grand Old Lady.

David started the model more than 40 years ago, obtaining drawings and photographs to help with the process.

Shortly afterward work was interrupted by a house move, and David learned that the hull plans



● David Brown with his award-winning model of HMS Warspite

Picture: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies

he had acquired were inaccurate.

The 20-year collection of photographs and notes were never recovered after the house move.

The next 30 years the model lived in a garage roof space.

David obtained more accurate plans from Greenwich National Maritime Museum, allowing him to carry on with the model, correcting the hull in the process.

It took David just two further years to complete the model, which won a gold medal and the Earl Mountbatten of Burma Trophy for best naval model in

2014 at the Model Engineering Exhibition in London.

The RN Submarine School Heritage Museum at HMS Raleigh has more than 30 submarine models created by David, while his other gold medal winner – a model of HMS

Leander – can be seen alongside Warspite in Devonport.

Members of the public will be able to view David's work at the first Heritage Centre open day of the year on April 3.

See [www.devonportnhc.wordpress.com/](http://www.devonportnhc.wordpress.com/) for details.

## A good year for Plymouth

THE Plymouth branch AGM and February monthly meeting attracted 85 members.

Chairman S/M Des McCarthy, reading the Trustees' Report for the past year, stated that the branch had enjoyed a successful year, maintained an enviable membership and provided a varied and successful social programme.

Branch donations to seven Naval-orientated charities, mentoring Naval recruits at HMS Raleigh, welfare support and ceremonial activities also play a very important part in the ethos of the branch.

The future social programme includes a visit to the National Arboretum at Alrewas, the Summer Ball in July and the branch's 70th anniversary dinner and dance in November.

One of the highlights during the meeting was a surprise presentation to Welfare Officer S/M Richard Tipping, who for 20 years has been a member of the Joint Services Hosanna House Group 507 – a voluntary group which takes dependants less fortunate and in need of spiritual help to Lourdes each May.

Branch member S/M Liz Jones, a local and internationally-known artist, commissioned a painting of the Virgin Mary looking upon the pilgrims of, and related to, tri-Service personnel.

## Ceres ceremony

LEEDS branch members were invited to the commissioning ceremony of HMS Ceres – the first Royal Naval Reserve unit to be commissioned in over 20 years on mainland Britain and the 15th in total.

The ceremony was held at Carlton Barracks, Leeds in the presence of the Princess Royal.

## £50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our February edition (right) was HMS Barrage, which was built by Hall Russell.

The correct answers were provided by M Gilhespy from Hartlepool, who wins £50.

This month's mystery ship (above), was built at the Bethlehem yard at Hingham, Massachusetts, during World War 2.

She was transferred to the Royal Navy in 1943, and before she was returned to the US at the end of 1945 (she was scrapped the following year) she was credited with five U-boat kills, all between June 1944 and March 1945.

1) What was her name while she was in the Royal Navy, and 2) what was her original American name?

We have removed her pennant number from the image.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News,



Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY. Coupons giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

The closing date for entries is May 13.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our June edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

## Area 7 dinner

FOR the second year running, the Association Area 7 AGM and dinner was held at the Holiday Inn, Cardiff.

This is fast becoming a popular and well-attended event, and has resulted in glowing reports of success from those attending – many of whom stayed overnight.

The organisation was carried out by an Area 7 committee with a great deal of input from the Cardiff and Rhondda branch secretaries.

## Coins created

A SET of coins has been designed by the London Mint Office to commemorate the role of Merchant Navy sailors in the Battle of the Atlantic.

A set of the coins has been donated to the HQS Wellington, – the floating livery hall of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners at Victoria Embankment in London.

Sales of sets of the coins will contribute to a donation by the Mint to the Merchant Navy Association.

The coins are made using silver recovered from the SS Gairsoppa which was sunk by U-boat 75 years ago resulting in the death of 85 merchant mariners.

↓ RNA HQ, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.

↓ [admin@royalnavalassoc.com](mailto:admin@royalnavalassoc.com)

↓ 023 9272 3747

↓ [www.royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk)



# PUSSER'S RUM

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Pusser's Rum has secured an exclusive discounted rate **ONLY** available at [www.drinkfinder.co.uk](http://www.drinkfinder.co.uk) (add: ROYALNAVY15 at the checkout)

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For all the facts visit [www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk)

**MYSTERY PICTURE 254**

Name .....

Address .....

My answers: (1).....

(2).....



## Degrees for medical staff

RN medics can now study for degrees at sea thanks to a link-up between Anglia Ruskin University and the Institute of Naval Medicine.

The courses offered by the university's 'Degrees at Work' scheme allow the 1,500 or so Medical Assistants across the Senior Service to study while carrying out their day jobs – something the institution already offers to the RAF and Army.

The university is providing advanced entry to its suite of leadership and management degrees to MAs, helping them to develop as leaders.

Surg Capt Mike Howell, in charge of the INM, said the team at Anglia Ruskin understood the career profile in the RN Medical Branch and had developed a degree programme which recognised the training and experience of personnel.

Find out more at [distancelearning.anglia.ac.uk/page.php/navy-140](http://distancelearning.anglia.ac.uk/page.php/navy-140).

## No NN? Try the unit post office

IF YOUR unit / billet / post is on the free distribution list for *Navy News* and you've not received your usual copy (yes, we're aware of the irony of printing this notice here...), check the mail room at your establishment.

We're testing a new, distribution list to eradicate duplicate copies and stop papers being sent to people who've long since moved post. As a result, some copies of *Navy News* will be held by the unit mail office.

If there are any problems beyond that, send an email into us at [edit@navynews.co.uk](mailto:edit@navynews.co.uk).



ADVENTUROUS training is rapidly changing not only within the RN but throughout the Services.

As overseas commitments for land-based forces decreases, it is evident that the number of personnel seeking training, rehabilitation and recreation has risen across the Armed Forces, writes CPO(PT) Tim Eckersley of HMS Temeraire.

The RN/RM however, remain heavily committed on operations and ready to deploy at any given notice. The impact of RN/RM life and its demands are unique – but so too are many of the single Service opportunities available to partake in Adventurous Training.

The Second Sea Lord has recently requested an increase in the delivery of AT support for front-line units – it remains 'Category A' in Personnel Functional Standards. Every serving member of the RN/RM is entitled to five days of AT a year.

This can be achieved in various forms – this is a simple guide on how to get involved.

### CHALLENGING ACTIVITIES

Challenging activities are low-level activities provided by regional AT centres and establishments: walking,

mountain biking, stand-up paddleboarding, dinghy sailing and cycle touring.

Each of these activities can be supported by any individual holding a challenging activities leadership award (CALA). Achieving CALA in a specific discipline is a simple process and can be arranged through your Regional ATI. You will then hold the qualification to lead groups within the remit of your award on designated routes and in authorised areas.

### FRONT-LINE SUPPORT

Front-line Support is the primary role of the ATI and the Naval Service Adventurous Training Team at HMS Temeraire. As a front-line unit you have the opportunity to take part in AT while deployed.

The NSATT will help arrange an entire AT package to suit your needs. It regularly provides AT packages in Portugal, Muscat, Bahrain, Dubai, South Africa and the United States. Consider your operational programme early and we can organise everything else – just call 9380 28050.

### DISTRIBUTED TRAINING

Distributed Training can be facilitated

by any individual holding the 'in date' Joint Service qualification in any specific chosen discipline.

DT will usually entitle the instructor to award foundation qualifications – this could be in any activity under the Joint Service Scheme.

Courses can be run in a five-day block period or over several shorter periods that make up the required duration for the course.

To become a DT provider you must hold the relevant Joint Service qualification and register with JSMTCT through the ATGA website.

### NAVAL OUTDOOR CENTRE, GERMANY

NOCG is a great asset to the Naval Service, providing a unique experience in summer and winter alike. Accommodating up to 60 Service personnel weekly in the heart of the Bavarian Alps, everyone should take the opportunity to visit and experience a challenging and fulfilling week of AT. See [www.nocg.co.uk](http://www.nocg.co.uk).

### RN/RM INDOOR CLIMBING WALL AWARD SCHEME

NSATT has now developed a single-Service Indoor Climbing Award Scheme to promote the use of its

## Where to look

### RNTM

077/16 RNSA Windsurfing Courses 2016

081/16 Eastern Region Golf 2016

083/16 Personal Ownership of the Recording of Leave and Authorised Absence on JPA by 31 Mar 16

### DIBS

08/16 New Employment Model (NEM): Armed Forces Pay

Reform Job Evaluation and Trade Supplement Placement Explained 10/16 Armed Forces Pay Award 2016

### DINS

2016DIN06-004 Cross-Government contract with Specsavers for corporate eyecare eye-sight tests and spectacles

2016DIN07-035 Enhanced Learning Credits for Service personnel

# Trailblazers who are apprenticeship(shape)

STANDING on the steps of Admiralty House in Portsmouth are the RN's inaugural 'apprentices of the year' (plus the First Sea Lord... who was an apprentice in the aviation industry before joining the Senior Service).

The Navy's outstanding young engineers, chefs, aircrew, logisticians and scientific data gatherers have been singled out for their efforts in the Service's first apprenticeship awards.

Fifteen of the best across the RN and RM were recognised by Admiral Sir George Zambellas, at a ceremony in Portsmouth: eight winners, seven highly commended – with the former going on to represent the Senior Service at the National Apprenticeship Awards later this year.

All attendees received a trophy, certificate and voucher for their efforts.

HMS Richmond's ET(WE) Raymond Hamilton, 29, was named the best engineering apprentice (fresh from being invited to No 10 to a reception for exemplary apprentices).

"While a lot of hard work was required to complete my training, it was both challenging and rewarding, and I hope to make use of all I have learned to make me a better engineer for my future in the Royal Navy," he said.

He's one of around 2,500 sailors and marines to receive an apprenticeship each year in the RN; together with the RAF and Army, the Forces are the largest employer of apprentices in the UK.

Admiral Zambellas stressed the importance of apprenticeships in the development of our people. As an advocate of the scheme he drew on his own experience and told the winners and runners-up "as an apprentice you never stop learning".

Cdr Sarah Johns, who is in charge of Education and



Picture: PO(Phot) Des Wade

Apprenticeships for the Royal Navy, instigated the awards and said: "Apprenticeships are the foundation of the learning journey Naval personnel embark upon on joining the Service and can be built on throughout their careers."

"The Royal Navy is highly regarded for its world-class training and apprentice opportunities, and these awards have enabled us to celebrate and reward the achievements of some outstanding individuals."

"Having the First Sea Lord present the awards made the occasion extra special, emphasising the importance of professional and personal development in the Royal Navy."

**Best Apprentice (Engineering):** ET(WE) Raymond Hamilton (HMS Richmond); Highly Commended: ET(ME) James Shilling (Northumberland), ET(WE) Anthony Finnegan, (Portland).

**Best Apprentice (Logistics):** Wtr Tobias Travers (Somerset); Highly Commended: Wtr Christopher Jamieson (Lancaster), CH Emma Dagley (Defender)

**Best Apprentice (Airside Operations):** LACMN Thomas Best (RNAS Yeovilton)

**Best Apprentice (Public Services):** AB(HM) Belinda Alker (Enterprise); Highly Commended: Mne James Collett (40 Cdo)

**Best Advanced Apprentice**

**Winner:** POET(ME) Michael Cowing (Northumberland)

**Highly Commended:** LET(WE) Sarah Mitchell (Northumberland)

**Apprentice Personal Achievement Award:** ET(WE) Kathryn Hunter (Ocean) and AET Katrina Knowles (RNAS Culdrose)

**Apprenticeship Champion**

**Winner:** POET(WE) Sarah Jenkins (Kent); Highly Commended: LCH Matthew Tew (Dragon)

**Hambone trophy** (awarded to the highest achieving student): AB(HM) Belinda Alker



# WELFARE

## Your WelComE account card...

A **WelComE account card** is assigned to you for your entire military career and can be used to access **telephone** and **Internet** services whilst deployed.

You should receive it after basic training. If you haven't been given it, speak to your admin officer. For more information visit: [www.mywelcome.co.uk](http://www.mywelcome.co.uk)

**Lost your account card?** No worries! Speak to your admin officer who will be able to provide you with your WelComE account number and a password to reset your PIN.

WelComE Customer Contact Centre  
customer.support@mywelcome.co.uk | [www.mywelcome.co.uk](http://www.mywelcome.co.uk)

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Boost self-esteem, mood, sleep quality and energy. Get moving



# ntures begin

existing and new climbing walls. The scheme is currently being trialled at HMS Temeraire and promises to enable quick and simple access to the climbing wall for users of all abilities and experience.

The recognition that indoor walls are a key component in functional fitness and can be incorporated into a daily training regime is fundamental to the development and success of the RN/RM Indoor Climbing Award Scheme.

The scheme is fully expected to be launched across the RN/RM this year as early trials are proving to be extremely successful.

## SINGLE-SERVICE SYMPOSIUMS

2016 will be the first year the Naval Service has provided the opportunity to attend RN/RM symposiums in a variety of disciplines, including rock climbing, cycle touring, *via ferrata* and skiing in the UK and overseas.

Each symposium will run for ten days and provide opportunities to gain qualifications or experience.

For more information contact NSATT or your nearest regional AT centre.

## Shab, not shabby

AMONG those who made use of the front-line AT packages on offer, the crews of minehunters Chiddingfold and Penzance.

ET Andrew Liston organised a trip to Wadi Shab, a gorge cut into the rock face by a freshwater stream heading out towards the coast.

About an hour and a half outside Muscat, the wadi is ranked as one of the top five 'must sees' for anyone visiting Oman.

Two dozen sailors from the two ships – that's about half the respective ship's companies – enjoyed a day of climbing, hiking and jumping into the crystal-clear waters of the gorge.

"I loved the whole experience of Muscat, from the smooth marble of the mosques to the roughness of the mountain tops; it is a very beautiful city," said Chid mine warfare specialist AB Liam Dore.

"But visiting a place like the Wadi Shab reminds me of why I joined the Royal Navy as I would never get opportunities such as this in civilian life."

Cheery Chid's Ops Officer Lt Rob Stone-Ward added: "Visits such as this are crucial for the ship's company."

"Working in a high-intensity environment on board a deployed minehunter brings with it real challenges and can result in fatigue."

"This period of adventurous training serves not only as a fresh challenge for the members of the crew – which takes their mind off their normal work – but also allows them to explore another country."

"It is a welcome opportunity to recharge batteries in preparation for the months ahead."



## Relationship counselling available

RN and RM personnel and their families now have free access to a range of counselling services provided by leading relationships charity Relate.

It's teamed up with the RNRMC to offer an initial seven free sessions of counselling to serving and former Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel and their families – face-to-face, by telephone or by webcam, depending on what suits people best – both here in the UK and for those deployed overseas.

Anyone who would prefer to talk to a trained counsellor about a specific issue via instant messaging can access Relate's Live Chat facility.

Relate's work extends beyond relationship counselling to sex therapy, family counselling or children and young people's counselling – which is also available thanks to the link-up.

Anyone who thinks the service might be of use to them should call the dedicated RNRMC phone line 01302 380279.

All calls – and sessions with counsellors – will be treated in full confidence.

## New look for Families Fed

WE'RE really pleased to launch our new logo and re-branding in this month's edition of *Navy News*.

As part of current work, completing a strategic review, the opportunity to re-invigorate our branding, emphasising our focus on the Naval family, is an outcome that we felt was very important.

We are looking forward to using the refreshed branding across our range of marketing and promotional materials, which we hope achieves the aim of being both eye-catching and appealing. The dedication to supporting our independent and resourceful families remains at the heart of our business, coupled with a revitalised and vibrant look.

Thank you to all of you who entered our mascot competition for this year's Army vs Navy rugby match at Twickenham. We were blown away by not only the fantastic stories, but also the amazing courage, character and enthusiasm that Naval Service children display. We hope the two

# Naval Families FEDERATION

lucky winners very much enjoy their day.

On our website – [www.nff.org.uk](http://www.nff.org.uk) – you can find out about our visit to CarillionAmey's headquarters, where we were pleased to see that many improvements to performance are already in place, including approved Saturday working for 50 more engineers to work on backlogs of outstanding defects, and a range of training programmes developed for all operatives.

The need for improvements to performance has been in response to our feedback to CarillionAmey and chain of command. We were able to present data on the main issues you have been contacting us with, so key areas of

performance improvement were able to be targeted. As always, please keep in touch with us, so we can continue to get your voice heard.

Finally, the spring edition of our magazine *Homeport* will be out soon. It will be packed full of useful information and an insightful feature on Scotland. Be sure to pick up your copy and remember that you can sign up to receive your free copy at home by emailing [editor@nff.org.uk](mailto:editor@nff.org.uk).



## Happy tally

STANDING proudly in front of his ship, 22-year-old weapon engineer Lyall Brand becomes the first sailor in more than a century to wear the tally 'HMS Prince of Wales' on his cap.

The Scotsman is the first junior rating to join the second of Britain's two new aircraft carriers – and hence the first sailor to have the privilege of wearing the tally (crew of the 1941 PoW merely wore 'HMS' due to wartime security restrictions).

"It is a fantastic honour to be the first member of the Royal Navy to wear this tally," he said. "This marks a very proud moment in my Naval career and one I will always remember."

Lyall, who hails from Glenrothes, just 15 miles up the road from Rosyth where Prince of Wales is being built, is now one of 18 sailors assigned to the 65,000-tonne warship.

She's due to be launched next year and is earmarked to go to sea in 2019.

During the time he's assigned to the Prince, ET Brand will learn about her systems and compartments and the technological leap over the rest of the Fleet that the carrier represents.

## Students in Solent storm

STUDENTS from Oxford, London and Southampton universities helped the Navy take down pirates in two all-action days off the Isle of Wight.

With patrol boats HMS Puncher and Blazer at their disposal, plus Hamble Independent Lifeboat and a helicopter from Solent Coastguard, 50 students from University Royal Naval Units experienced life at the sharper edge – exactly why Solent Storm has been introduced into the UNRU curriculum.

The 14 boats assigned to universities take students around the UK over Easter and around Europe – even as far east as St Petersburg on occasions.

Substantial achievements though these are, they're mostly flag-flying affairs – there's not a whole lot of front-line action, hence Solent Storm.

The premise this year? The country of Solentia was plagued by pirates ('The Surf Seed Boyz') – until HMS Blazer and Puncher intervened, supported

by Hamble Independent Lifeboat (for boarding operations) and Solent Coastguard helicopter.

The pirates – played by students crewing yachts from the military sailing centre in Gosport – first faced interrogation over the radio before boarding teams of students climbed into the lifeboat – which acted as a makeshift raider as the P2000 patrol boats carry nothing similar.

"The scenario for the weekend focused on a fictional situation where both Blazer and Puncher were gathering intelligence information, stopping and searching sailing vessels, speaking to local fishermen, searching their boats and dealing with casualties," said Blazer's CO Lt Joe Curren, who helped to organise the weekend.

For good measure Solent Storm, which saw the boats put into Coves for one day, also saw the UNRU students practising dealing with casualties at sea during a winning drill with the Coastguard helicopter.

# WE NEED YOUR EXPERIENCE IN RECRUITING

## APPLY TO BECOME A CAREERS ADVISER - A MOST REWARDING SECOND CAREER

Flag Officer Sea Training is currently seeking RN and RM WOs, Senior Rates and SNCO Service Leavers and former Service (those that left Service under 2 years), to work in Armed Forces Careers Offices around the UK.

- Enlist on Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) Limited Commitment employment in specific locations.
- Salary from £29k with promotion opportunities to rise to £41k.
- FTRS rates of pay apply (Reviewed annually and pensionable)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON CURRENT CAREERS ADVISER VACANCIES CONTACT:**

**PSTN: 01929 403172 MIL: 94374 3172**

**e-mail: [navycnr-rnsrtrainingassist@mod.uk](mailto:navycnr-rnsrtrainingassist@mod.uk)**







● **LC Rebecca and OC Gabe** of Cambridge unit, who have berths in TS Royalist

## First trip on Corps flagship

**CAMBRIDGE** Sea Cadets have made their mark on TS Royalist for the first time.

Since the first TS Royalist was commissioned back in 1971, Cambridge unit cadets have never been able to sail upon the ship – until now.

The unit received a bursary for two cadets for a week's voyage on the new flagship – which was introduced to the Corps sailing programme last year – in the next coming months.

Two cadets were randomly picked out of the Commanding Officer's cap at the unit's Christmas dinner party by a member of the Royal Naval Association – and LC Rebecca and OC Gabe were the lucky two chosen to take this rare opportunity.

When asked how she felt about a berth on the flagship, LC Rebecca said: "I turn 18 in June, which means I will no longer be a cadet."

"So I would really like to do as much as possible in that time – and with my upcoming voyage on TS Royalist, it won't just be the highlight of the year, but also the best experience of my cadet career."

OC Gabe said: "I've been in the Corps now for two years and nothing as extraordinary has come along before this."

"I've been to area and national drill and piping, and Bisleigh to represent my unit, but these won't be anything compared to when I go on TS Royalist."

Royalist is the replacement for the recently-decommissioned flagship, also named Royalist, which served from 1971 to 2014 – a total of 43 years.

The new ship's offshore programme started last month and will go through to November, featuring dozens of port visits on the coast of the UK and in Northern Europe.

The two cadets from Cambridge Sea Cadet unit said they will keep a blog of their week on TS Royalist.

## Football title shared

THE footballing giants of the Sea Cadet world met up in the West Midlands for the Corps' national 5-a-side competition – and the honours were shared between London and Eastern Areas.

More than 200 Sea Cadets from across the country took part in the competition, which was split between two locations – Nesscliffe Training Camp and RAF Shawbury, both in Shropshire.

The winners of each category were:

- Girls Junior: **Cambs & Fens District (Eastern Area);**
- Boys Junior: **Kingston & District (London Area);**
- Girls Senior: **South Central District (Southern Area);**
- Boys Senior: **Burton on Trent (Eastern Area).**

# Navy strengthens links with cadets

THE Royal Navy is strengthening its relationship with its family of Naval Cadet Forces.

Commodore Core Training (COMCORE) Cdre Bob Fancy is the officer who has responsibility for the delivery of Naval Cadet Forces – the Sea Cadets, the RN sections of Combined Cadet Force (CCF) units and the Volunteer Cadet Corps (VCC); all three of these run their own Royal Marines sections.

In addition, COMCORE is responsible for the RN Sea Scout recognition scheme.

The Plymouth-based officer intends to create closer ties with all four Naval youth organisations, whilst exploring opportunities to work with the wider youth community.

Cdre Fancy sees the diversity of Naval Cadets and Scouts as a key strength, offering slightly different experiences but with RN core values as a common theme.

Those experiences can be considerably enhanced, through a closer engagement by the RN.

"I am looking to provide a better Cadet experience by facilitating closer relationships between the Navy's assets around the country and the Naval Youth groups in their area," said Cdre Fancy.

The first stage of strengthening RN ties with Naval youth will be to ensure each University Royal Naval Unit (URNU), as part of COMCORE, is aware of the Cadet units and RN Sea Scout groups in their area.

By being in regular correspondence with these groups, Cdre Fancy believes URNU COs will be able to offer them assistance



● **Cdre Bob Fancy**

in a variety of ways, enriching the Cadet experience.

"It's not about owning these groups, but getting into dialogue, perhaps knowing that a Cadet unit has a desperate need for someone to teach navigation, and knowing that an individual at a nearby URNU can support them."

For the longer term, Cdre Fancy sees this cooperative approach extending to encompass the Regional Forces organisation, the Maritime Reserves and the wider Naval family.

This is a relationship that can add benefit both ways – cadets are already key to providing a Naval presence at ceremonial events across the country.

There are also many thousands of Cadets and Scouts that play an active role in their community, providing assistance at charity events, air shows and open days.

The Royal Navy's various Naval Cadet organisations each have a proud history whilst remaining relevant to young people of today.

The largest, the Sea Cadet Corps (SCC), has 400 units supporting over 14,000 Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets.

The Marine Society Sea Cadets charity (MSSC) administers and funds the Sea Cadets (although MOD provides an annual operating grant), setting policy and strategy.

The CCF has 7,500 cadets across 143 Royal Navy sections in schools across the country.

Funded by the MOD, the CCF complements the cadets' academic education, offering a broad range of opportunities to gain qualifications in leadership and all manner of activities on the water.

The CCF experience is highly valued by pupils and staff alike, helping young people develop personally and professionally.

The VCC has around 800 members in five units or 'divisions' based at RN and RM establishments.

Three divisions (HMS Excellent, RM Stonehouse and CTC Lymington) follow the traditions of the Royal Marines, and two divisions (HMS Collingwood and HMS Sultan) are run along Royal Navy lines.

The VCC relies on support from unpaid volunteers, many serving or ex-serving personnel.

As each VCC division is based at an establishment, it provides a valuable link with the local community.

The Cadet experience is subtly different to that of the

other organisations, with more emphasis on discipline, drill and physical effort.

The positive effect VCC divisions have on the communities local to RN/RM establishments is something Cdre Fancy is keen to support.

"The VCC is an organisation that the Royal Navy is proud to have as part of the Naval family," he said.

At present, the Royal Navy also recognises 103 Sea Scout groups.

Sea Scouts do all of the activities a normal Scout would do but with the emphasis on waterborne activities, seamanship and navigation.

Although these groups, like the other 300-plus Sea Scout groups nationally, are governed by the Scout Association, the RN recognition scheme allows them to benefit from being part of the Naval family.

These groups get access to four RN-supported camps throughout the year and wear a special RN badge on their uniform.

The value of Cadet organisations to young people has been recognised by the government in the form of the Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP), and Cdre Fancy said that there are plans for growth in both the CCF and SCC.

"We aim to open, under the government's CEP, 24 new CCF units in state schools by 2020, which will be funded by LIBOR fines," he said.

"As part of the same CEP we have worked with the MSSC."

"They are using a share of the LIBOR funding to open 14 new SCC units in the same period."

As well as the government-funded expansion of CCF and Sea Cadet units, Cdre Fancy wants to expand the RN recognition scheme for Sea Scouts.

"We are hoping to expand the scheme to include more Sea Scout groups. All Sea Scouts that want it will get RN recognition," he said.

There are plans to organise the groups into two tiers – the Admiral's Squadron, which would cover the top 100, and the Commodore's Flotilla for the other groups.

As with the SCC pennant and burgee system, the hope is that this will introduce an element of enthusiastic competition between troops and groups, with greater access to camps and grants as a reward for being in the top tier.

Another project under consideration is the expansion of the VCC.

Following a study into the populations surrounding Naval bases, it is hoped that new units will be established in areas near RN and RM establishments where there is a lack of facilities for young people.

In light of his ambitious programme of expansion and integration, Cdre Fancy sees his team's role as one of bringing the different elements of Naval Youth together and making sure the Navy has a positive impact on young people's lives.

"I'd like to see all our Cadets and Scouts do more with each other," said the Commodore.

"We all have common values and standards that make us part of the Naval Family."

"I'd like to see as many young people as possible benefit from that experience."



● **Cllr Brenda Arthur, Lord Mayor of Norwich, with Josh Hayles, winner of the Michael Bacon Award**

## Norwich reflects on a busy year

CADETS from Norwich unit reflected on a busy year during their annual presentation evening at St Matthews Church.

Cadets and staff spent time at sea, putting into practice what they learned at their Norwich HQ – including a dozen youngsters who travelled to Plymouth to join TS John Jerwood.

They sailed across the Channel in a 14-hour journey to Brittany, then called into small fishing villages during the week.

Cadets have been involved in canoeing, sailing and power boating, as well as paying visits to the SCC area boating station at Thrapston, near Swindon.

They also assisted at events around Norfolk, such as the annual international polo match at Langley Abbey and the boat show at Horning.

CPO (SCC) Mike Massen, Officer in Charge since last November, said: "The unit works very hard within the Sea Cadet Corps and the local community, and it is always a pleasure to see our young people striving to learn all they can about maritime life and its ways, along with the traditions of the Royal and Merchant Navies."

"The Sea Cadet Corps is not a pre-Service organisation, but for those who wish to have a career at sea, the Corps gives them a good insight, along with a good knowledge base, for when they start their training."

"The Corps also shapes them into good and useful members of society by helping them to develop a sense of responsibility."

"They are a credit to themselves and their parents."

Awards were presented by Cllr Brenda Arthur, Lord Mayor of Norwich, and included Junior Cadet of the Year (Robin Bland), Boatwork Cup award (Cdt Holly Kett), Michael Bacon Award for most outside activities and assisting in fundraising events (Josh Hayles), CO's Award for progress (Amin Hamoudi), best-dressed cadet (Cdt Devon Mcinnis), Senior Cadet of the Year (LC Sophie Ralph – who is the 2016 Lord Lieutenant's Cadet) and Best Royal Marines Cadet (MC2 Jamie Clemson).

## River rescue

A CADET and volunteer from Wandsworth unit rescued a man who was spotted clinging to a capsized boat on the River Thames.

The beachmaster spotted the man and radioed PPO Harvey and OC Poppy to assist.

They were able to rescue him from the water and tow him ashore.

The rower thanked the heroic pair for "a very professional rescue" – and showed his appreciation by making a donation to the unit.



● **A Dover and Deal unit team selfie at the East Kent District drill and piping competition**

## Sharp drill at Dover and Deal

DOVER and Deal proved their drill was too sharp for their rivals at the East Kent District Drill and Piping Competition.

Many weeks of dedicated training and practice – as well as hours bringing their uniforms to the best possible condition – came down to an 11-minute routine as 17-year-old POC Oliver Worsell aged 17 led the team onto the drill square, and reported them to the competition judges.

With the drill squad's routine over, it was the turn of the unit

piping team, who performed five pipes.

The cadets then had a wait to find out the results. After what seemed like hours they mustered for the announcement by Deputy District Officer East Kent Lt Cdr (SCC) Kevin Martin RNR.

First was the unarmed squad, and smiles spread as they realised that they were in top spot – ending with a huge cheer as the first place was confirmed.

Next was the result of the Unarmed Squad Commander

competition – and last year's winner, Dover's POC Oliver Worsell, retained his title.

The title of best dressed piping cadet was awarded to LC Natasha Miles.

Finally the team piping competition results – and once again it quickly became apparent that Dover and Deal had taken the top prize.

The unit's drill squad were due to represent East Kent District at the Southern Area competition at RAF Halton in Aylesbury as *Navy News* went to press.



## Double honour at Barrow

BARROW unit has won two trophies after an outstanding performance last year.

The first was the Stephenson Trophy for the best unit in the North West Area.

Unit CO Lt Cdr (SCC) Ted Creighton RNR was presented with the trophy during the Area Conference.

It is the second time the unit has won the award in the 58 years the trophy has been presented.

The North West area covers 58 Sea Cadet units from as far north as Carlisle, as far south as Stafford, and as far as Buxton in the east and Holyhead in the west.

The unit was also presented with the Gravestock Trophy for the best Junior Section in the North West Area.

This is the second consecutive year the unit has won this trophy, setting and holding an extremely high standard.

The unit was also presented with a Captain's Commendation for its outstanding standard – the second consecutive such award.

## Appeal for volunteers

THE Sea Cadet Corps enlisted the help of students when they put out an appeal for volunteers.

As part of Student Volunteering Week, the Corps offered students a chance to get involved with units, emphasising the potential to gain nationally accredited qualifications such as sailing, rowing and first aid, which can enhance a CV.

Shelley Brown, Lead Development Opportunities Officer at Sea Cadets, said: "If you're studying for a career that involves working with young people, volunteering at Sea Cadets will provide an important insight and vital work experience in supporting young people."

Research from Youth United shows that 31 per cent of Sea Cadet units are in the poorest quartile of locations in the UK, and young people living in challenged locations may have fewer opportunities available for them, making it more important that they are involved in structured youth activity.



# Glory for Guildford

GUILDFORD have beaten five rival Royal Marines Cadet (RMC) detachments to win arguably the most gruelling competition in the Sea Cadet Corps calendar.

The eight-strong Guildford team, representing Zulu Coy (Southern Area), took the Gibraltar Cup at the Royal Marines' Commando Training Centre in Lympstone.

Considered the pinnacle of the RMC year, the weekend saw 48 cadets complete a tough obstacle course, as well as six leadership tasks that tested their navigation, teamwork, shooting and communication skills.

They had to make their way across challenging moorland to timed deadlines and display a variety of skills, including camouflage and concealment, observation, judging distance and practical leadership.

Throughout the competition, the cadet teams, known as sections, were assessed and scored by serving Royal Marines.

RM Commando Capt Broughton, who helped organise the weekend, said the cadets all performed at the standard the Royal Marines expect of an adult recruit after 14 weeks training, and the establishment was very impressed with their high standards.

There was a second cause for celebration for the Guildford team when Cpl Benjamin

was awarded the Section Commanders' Leadership Trophy as well.

Detachment Commander Sgt Kev Lomas said: "Myself and the other detachment staff have been very impressed with the spirit and level of effort the team, including reserves, have put in to preparing for the competition."

"They have enjoyed their training and worked hard throughout, and were excited and nervous about the competition."

"The cadets loved the competition but found it challenging, and all the staff and the parents of the cadets are very proud of their team spirit and achievements."

The full results were:  
1 – Zulu Coy (Guildford) Southern Area;  
2 – Lima Coy (Kingston) London;  
3 – Alpha Coy (Birmingham Vernon) South West;  
4 – X Ray Coy (Leeds) Eastern;  
5 – Bravo Coy (Warrington) North West;  
6 – Yankee Coy (Belfast) Northern.

Guildford Detachment opened in March 2012 and has gone from strength to strength in a relatively short time.

Next year the unit celebrates its 75th anniversary and currently has 18 RM Cadets (aged 13-17), 20 Sea Cadets (aged 12-17) and 14 Junior Cadets (aged 10-12) on the books, as well as ten adult volunteers – but they are always looking for more...



Pictures: Justin Sutcliffe

## Copley unit is commissioned

THE Copley Academy Sea Cadets have been officially welcomed into the Corps in a commissioning ceremony at the school.

The school, in Stalybridge, Cheshire, has had a Sea Cadet unit since September 2014 as part of the government's Cadet Expansion Programme.

Cadets were inspected by Captain Sea Cadets Capt Phil Russell, who said he was very impressed.

"To see the level of turnout both in personal appearance and confidence on parade was

exemplary, so I was really proud," said Capt Russell.

According to the school's website: "Records show behaviour and school attendance improved over the academic year for 40 per cent of the 15 regularly-attending cadets since the unit was established."

"Of the 12 cadets surveyed by unit volunteers in July 2015, all said they felt a lot more confident and focused in the classroom since becoming a cadet."

"And all said they had a lot more self-esteem, friends and skills."

## Hold your own Patron's Lunch

THE Sea Cadet Corps is encouraging units to throw their own Patron's Lunch.

As previously announced, Sea Cadets are very excited to join the Patron's Lunch celebrations on Sunday June 12 to mark the Queen's 90th birthday.

As part of this, the Corps is suggesting units might like to throw their own Patron's Lunch celebrations for their local community – host a street party, hold a picnic, maybe even join up with other local units to plan a fete.

All events, no matter how large or small, will provide a great fundraising opportunity as well as raising awareness of the organisation in communities.

HQ staff will be adding fundraising, marketing and public relations advice specific to the Patron's Lunch in the coming weeks.

## Kingston reap rewards

PRESENTATIONS have been made to high-achieving Royal Marines Cadets at a ceremony in Stationers' Hall in London.

The Master of the Stationers' Company, Mrs Helen Esmonde, presented the Stationers' Cup to Cadet Sgt Nithusan Rajaratnam as the most outstanding RMC of the London and Essex Detachments of Sea Cadets (right).

Raj, as he is known to his fellow cadets, is currently taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme and is the sole Cadet Sergeant within Lima Coy.

He is also the Deputy Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for the Royal Borough of Kingston-upon-Thames.

He was an integral part of the Kingston detachment's success at the annual assessment and shows that, with a positive attitude and determination, a cadet can achieve outstanding results for himself and his fellow cadets.

The Master also presented the Stationers' Shield to the Kingston Detachment – their fourth success in a row.

Under the leadership of Lt Greaves, Sgt Wilde, and Sgt Trovalusci, the detachment has thrived and once again become the top detachment in the London area.



They have attended numerous events throughout London, including the Lord Mayor's Parade in November, in which they marched with the Stationers' Company as part of their float.

Last month the detachment were runners-up in the Gibraltar Cup competition (see top of page).

The Stationers' Company is very proud of its association with the Royal Marines, which goes back over 70 years.

The connection stretches from

the serving marines through the City of London Royal Marines Reserves to the London District Royal Marines Cadets.

The Stationers' Company is the City of London Livery Company for the communications and content industries.

The majority of members work in or supply the paper, print, publishing, packaging, office products, newspaper, and broadcasting and online media industries.

## Corps promotes swimming

LEARNING to swim can be life-changing as well as lifesaving.

Sea Cadets encourages young people to learn to swim and gain confidence in the water, which in turn helps prevent drowning accidents and hands them the knowledge to save their life and the lives of others.

Alex Walsh, who joined as a Sea Cadet and now volunteers at his local unit, recently won an act of bravery award for saving a man's life at sea.

"It's vitally important that all young people learn to swim – it saves lives," said Alex.

"Young people learning to swim can join Sea Cadets and gain key lifesaving skills such as how to summon first aid assistance and the dangers of ponds, rivers and seas."

"This is alongside the teamwork, confidence and communication skills that all cadets develop and can be crucial in dangerous situations."

Research by the Royal Life Saving Society UK reveals that last year 400 people died from drowning – that's more than people dying from domestic fires and cycling.

Meanwhile the Amateur Swimming Association found that almost half (48 per cent) of seven to 11-year-olds in England – some 1.1 million children – cannot swim the length of a standard pool (25 metres), despite it being compulsory for primary schools to provide swimming lessons.

Sea Cadets teaches young people the importance of respecting the water, learning the dangers of open waters and how to summon help.

Young people gaining this fundamental skill can then challenge themselves through a range of nautical activities like sailing, kayaking and rowing at their local Sea Cadet unit.

The progressive training programme that Sea Cadets offers aims to have a positive impact on young people's life chances.

This includes improving attendance and achievement in school, supporting post-16 destinations in employment and further education, enhancing long term well-being, contributing to a reduction of risky behaviours and increasing participation in communities.

You can find your local unit at [www.sea-cadets.org/units](http://www.sea-cadets.org/units)

## Peers are role models

WITH advanced level specialist qualifications in marine engineering, seamanship and first aid, and waterborne expertise in offshore sailing, dinghy sailing, power boating and canoeing, four Leading Cadets from Worcester unit have taken full advantage of what's on offer in the Corps.

All four trained under the Peer Educator scheme, introduced by the Sea Cadets last year, and make a major contribution to their unit.

They proved outstandingly successful in motivating and providing role models for the younger cadets and at leading unit activities.

They have also shared their skills and enthusiasm actively in the district.

Two of the four have designs on a career in the Royal Navy, and all four will move on from the Corps in due course with leadership, teaching and communication skills which will be of immense value in whatever they choose to do with their lives.

They would also be the first to admit to having had a great deal of fun and made lifelong friends into the bargain.



## Aiming for excellence with all of our students

LOCATED in Portsmouth, St John's College, a day and boarding school for boys and girls aged two to 18, has enjoyed a long and established history of educating students from Service families.

We educate in a supportive yet challenging environment, encouraging students to get involved with co-curricular activity to enhance their education experience.

Our aim is excellence for all our students. No matter what their particular strengths and starting points, we do everything we can to help them thrive and realise their full potential.

Mrs Connie Waterfield, who has two girls at St John's College, said: "St John's provides stability in a supportive environment and this is the main reason we chose

the college for our two daughters.

"Military children support each other when their parents are deployed, and as I knew other military families who have children at St John's I knew my children would be in good hands.

"The boarding staff and House Parents are a great support to the students. They are on hand to help when needed, and because of the close-knit community my girls feel like they belong to an extended family. The girls enjoy their time at school and always have much to talk about when they are home. I couldn't ask for more."

■ Visit us during our next Open Event: Saturday April 16 9.30am – 12.30pm. Contact us on 023 9281 5118 or visit our website [www.stjohnscollege.co.uk](http://www.stjohnscollege.co.uk) to book a place.



● Inspectors praised RHS' association with the Navy

## Excellent rating in all areas

THE Royal Hospital School in Holbrook, Suffolk was visited by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) and the report is summarised as follows:

"The school has clear aspirations for its pupils.

"It seeks to promote the attributes of inspiration, challenge and leadership in its pupils.

"Pupils are encouraged to strive for academic excellence and to endorse the values of service, loyalty and commitment whilst upholding the school's unique and rich heritage.

"The school encourages leadership and a sense of adventure and self-discovery.

"A high priority is the promotion of service both within the school

and to the wider community."

Nine ratings were given in the full report, and the Royal Hospital School received the top excellent rating in all areas.

Highlighting the school's long association with the Royal Navy, the report stated that "Pupils show strong moral and social awareness and their sense of British values is highly tuned as a direct result of the school's links with the Royal Navy."

For more information and to read the full report go to [www.royalhospitalschool.org](http://www.royalhospitalschool.org) or join us at our open morning on May 14 2016. To book a place contact Kate Evers on 01473 326136 or email [admissions@royalhospitalschool.org](mailto:admissions@royalhospitalschool.org)

A Christian co-educational day and boarding school for ages 2 - 18

**Open Event**  
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**Students thrive at St John's College**

## Key roles for sport and art

WEST HILL Park School offers pupils a high level of responsibility, specialist lessons within specialist classrooms, including a wide range of sporting, music, drama and extracurricular activities with the emphasis on development of the whole child.

All children receive the level of support needed within small classes, using a variety of teaching methods and experiences.

Our children take part in a comprehensive programme of sports taken to a high level, including team matches, tournaments, county and national events.

All children swim at least once a week and there are opportunities for horse riding, karate and archery to name but a few!

Forest School gives children the opportunity to make camp fires and build dens within the school grounds. Each break time holds an element of exploration, whether it is imaginative play in the woods, playing football, taking part in a tennis match or completing a project in the Design and Technology studio.

The arts play a fundamental part in our school ethos as children develop their confidence both on and off the stage.

There are opportunities to sing in several choirs, learn a musical instrument, play in an orchestra and other musical ensembles, create works of art and complete stunning wood and metalwork projects.

West Hill creates a family atmosphere for both its boarders and day pupils. We are a happy and thriving school and the proof can be seen in all of our confident, respectful, enthusiastic and talented children.

Have you considered prep school education? It is more accessible than you think. We offer a broad academic curriculum supported by sport, swimming, music, art, drama, design and technology as well as Forest School.

For further information about CEA and top-up bursaries or to arrange a visit please call Mrs Ramsay, Registrar 01329 842356 or email [admissions@westhillpark.com](mailto:admissions@westhillpark.com) or visit our website [www.westhillpark.com](http://www.westhillpark.com)

**RATED 'EXCELLENT' IN ALL AREAS**  
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**Inspire, Challenge & Lead**

The Royal Hospital School is a leading co-educational boarding school for 11 to 18 year olds, located in 200 acres of Suffolk countryside. It has a thriving CCF and more than 200 pupils have some connection to the armed services.

Generous assistance with fees for all serving and retired RN and RM personnel.

**The Royal Hospital School**

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"The School provides an outstanding level of care." (OFSTED)

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**Thursday**  
**5th May 2016**

Tours at  
10.30am & 2.00pm

**Open Morning**

**Saturday**  
**7th May 2016**

9.30 - 11.00 am



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Means tested Bursaries available

**01329 842356**  
**[www.westhillpark.com](http://www.westhillpark.com)**



# Dukies do love a challenge

OUR students are often invited to take part in high-profile events – in November last year they were chosen to take part in Remembrance Day events at Westminster Abbey, the Royal Albert Hall and in Flanders. Then in January this year our impressive Military Band was invited to play at the Sun Military Awards, where they met high-profile guests including Rod Stewart, Ian Wright, Mayor of London Boris Johnson and Defence Secretary Michael Fallon.

At the end of the autumn term, the school put on a dazzling production of *Cabaret* which was thoroughly enjoyed by all who came to watch.

This vibrant show was a challenging performance that represented the next step in the development of the performing arts at the school.

This followed on from our US/UK collaborative production of *West Side Story* the previous year, and will be followed by a further international joint venture.

**Dukies love a challenge!** Last year they visited Borneo, trekking miles through the jungle on the expedition of a lifetime, building character and resilience along the way.

This was in addition to the Adventure Training Week which takes place every Easter, Combined Cadet Force camps, the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme and at the Lent half term the school ski trip, enabling students to hone their skills on the slopes with expert guidance.



## Dauntsey's is happy place says Tiggy

TIGGY Lovering joined Dauntsey's aged 11 and is now in Year 4.

Her father is in the Royal Navy and is posted to Norway. "We chose Dauntsey's because it offered a fantastic range of extra-curricular activities and it was reassuring to know there are plenty of Forces pupils here – they know what it's like to have moved house a lot!" she said.

"I didn't find it hard to settle in. The Lower School boards in the Manor which is a lovely old building, separate to the Main School. This really gives us a sense of 'going home' at the end of the school day.

"Everyone is very friendly and supportive and we always have plenty of fun things to do in our spare time.

"I have been ice-skating in Swindon, shopping in Bath and

there are masses of weekend activities, such as movie nights, as well as sporting fixtures on Saturdays.

"I keep in daily contact with my family and my mother comes over for exeat. I would recommend Dauntsey's to anyone thinking of boarding in the UK – there is so much on offer and it's a very happy place to be."

Dauntsey's is situated near Salisbury Plain and offers pupils challenge and inspiration inside and outside the classroom.

Our adventure education and extra-curricular programmes set us apart, encouraging pupils to try new experiences.

Happiness, self-esteem and confidence are the consequences of a Dauntsey's education.

Discover Dauntsey's – a friendly and spirited community at [www.dauntseys.org](http://www.dauntseys.org)

# Magical time at Perrott Hill

PERROTT Hill is in large part defined by its warm community and extensive offering amidst wonderful facilities.

At a time when the charitable status of independent schools is under ever-increasing scrutiny, Perrott Hill has long extended its community through an exciting and creative programme of events that typify the school's provision.

These see scores of local primary school pupils taking part.

Just in recent months, a Forest School workshop witnessed whittling, the cooking of scones on an open fire and the creation of 'magic wands'.

The woods and theatre have played host to a Land Art Challenge and Drama day.

The idyllic front playing fields have teemed with participants in a tag rugby festival of coaching and match play.

And persuasive oratory and drama have played out in a mock trial involving magistrates from Yeovil.

At each, Perrott Hill has been delighted to involve pupils from many local primary schools.

● Cooking around the camp fire – Perrott Hill has involved pupils from many local primary schools



## Perrott Hill

*Time and space for a full education*





Perrott Hill's Independent Schools Inspectorate Report was outstanding, with the top mark of 'Excellent' awarded in each and every category. We encourage you to read the Tatler Schools Guide 2016 and the Good Schools Guide reports which capture the values and ethos of this flourishing co-educational boarding school.

Perrott Hill, North Perrott, Crewkerne, Somerset, TA18 7SL 01460 72051 [www.perrotthill.com](http://www.perrotthill.com) [headmaster@perrotthill.com](mailto:headmaster@perrotthill.com)

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- An independent school atmosphere at an affordable price. £3,940 per term\* covers ALL the boarding costs, with the education paid for by the State.
- Graded 'Good' in all areas by Ofsted.
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- Full and weekly boarding available.
- Students enjoy an active lifestyle including sport, music, drama and outdoor activities, with over 70 clubs and activities offered.
- Unique ethos helps promote character and life skills, with students encouraged to achieve their potential in a supportive community.
- Frequent involvement in high profile National events including the Royal Festival of Remembrance.

2015/16 fees are just £11,820\* per year.  
If you qualify for CEA, you will only pay £1,182 per year.



**OPEN MORNING**  
Saturday 07 May 2016




## Discover Dauntsey's



*A friendly and spirited community*

"Dauntsey's is noted for its unpretentious and friendly atmosphere. Our pupils come from many different schools and arrive at Dauntsey's eager to make new friends and ready for a challenge."

- Joanna Sagers, Registrar

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\*Fees are reviewed annually



# Your chance to join an exclusive group

The Chartered Management Institute (CMI) is offering internationally-recognised management and leadership qualifications to members of the Royal Navy, who have already completed accredited learning during their career.

To be eligible personnel must meet the following criteria:

■ Currently serving in the Royal Navy, in the Reserves or is a veteran

■ To have completed an accredited course on or after January 1 2010

CMI offer 12 months free membership to those in the Royal Navy undertaking one of their qualifications.

Membership offers access to CMI's complete range of membership benefits including, ManagementDirect – CMI's complete online portal of management and leadership resources, to the opportunity to network at one of their popular regional events.

Learners also have the opportunity to take their qualification further by working towards Chartered Manager (CMgr) status.

Awarded only by CMI, becoming chartered demonstrates the vast range of skills and experience gained during a career in the Royal Navy and validates it against benchmarks recognised by those working and recruiting in the civilian sector.

Chartered Manager status makes clear that not only do individual's skills and experience match or exceed those of civilian job seekers, but as a Chartered Manager they join an exclusive group of individuals who add value to their organisations, maintain best practice in the workplace and get results.

For more information contact CMI on [mod@managers.org.uk](mailto:mod@managers.org.uk) or call 0333 220 3143.

● The University of Portsmouth's MA looks at 400 years of Naval history



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Get the qualifications and confidence you need to go further with our Math@sea and Writing@sea online courses.

[education@ms-sc.org](mailto:education@ms-sc.org) [marine-society.org](http://marine-society.org)



Marine Society & Sea Cadets, a charity registered in England and Wales 313013 and in Scotland SC037808

## Online courses @Sea

THE Marine Society's highly regarded @Sea online programmes are designed especially for seafarers to improve their basic knowledge of maths and English, using nautical language and examples.

Maths@Sea and Writing@Sea are online maritime-themed e-learning courses that are free to Royal Navy personnel and can be completed anywhere in the world, and are recognised by the Nautical Institute and IMarEST.

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Contact your base, ship education officer, or the RN Training Department to request access to the Marine Society's @Sea programmes.

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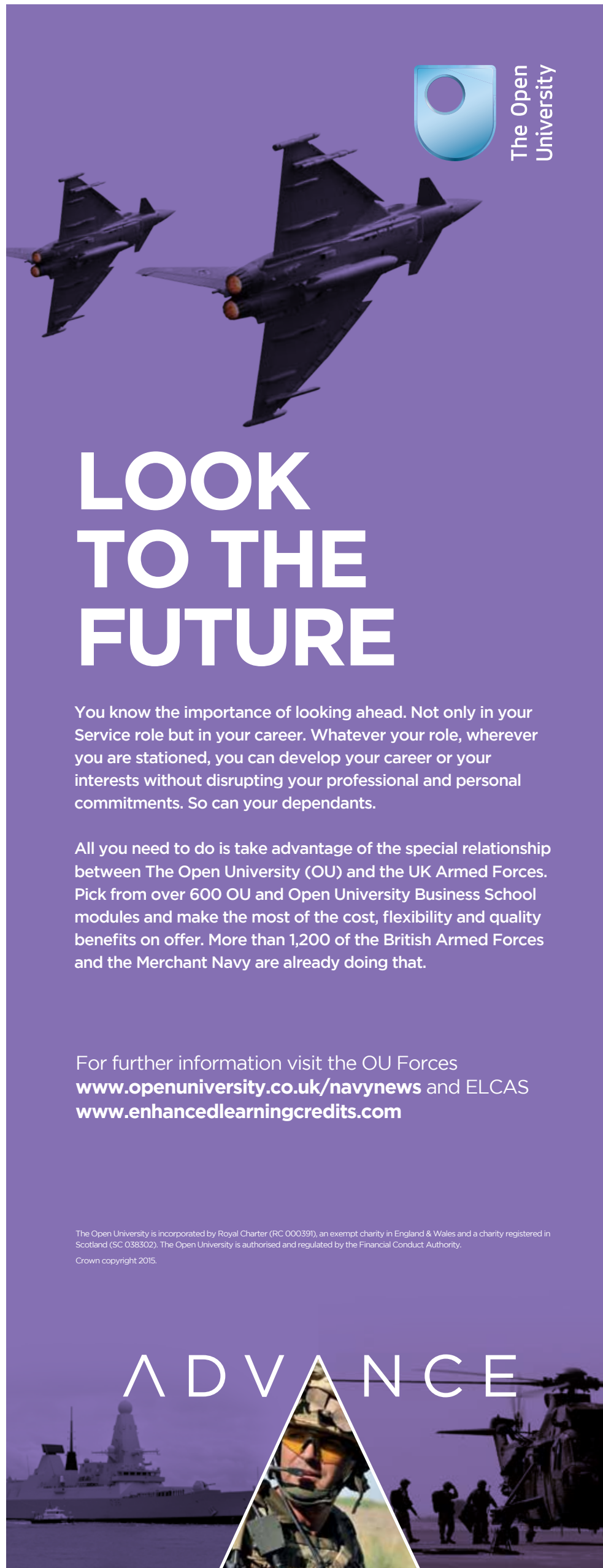
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# ADVANCE





## Third K13 memorial in Sydney

IN the K13 story in the March edition of *Navy News* there is mention of two memorials to those killed in her tragic sinking in the Gareloch, one at Faslane Cemetery and a second at Govan, in Glasgow.

In fact there is a third memorial to K13, at Carlingford, near Parramatta, Sydney, New South Wales.

One of K13's survivors, former L/Tel Charles Freestone, later emigrated to Australia with his family and set up a successful furniture business in Parramatta, but he never forgot his former comrades lost in K13 and he arranged for a memorial to be erected on a plot of land he had bought at nearby Carlingford.

Sadly Charles died before he could build the memorial, but the project was completed by his widow and was dedicated on September 10 1961.

At that time the RN 4th Submarine Flotilla was based at HMAS Penguin, in Sydney Harbour and I believe they took on the responsibility of looking after the K13 memorial and held services there on the anniversary of her loss.

In 1967 the Royal Australian Navy formed the 4th Submarine Squadron based at HMAS Platypus, in Neutral Bay, with the arrival of their first Oberon-class submarine HMAS Oxley. The last RN 4th Submarine Squadron returned to the UK during 1969 (the RAN Submarine Squadron was then renamed the 1st Submarine Squadron and took over responsibility for the K13 Memorial and hold Ceremonial Divisions there annually).

In the mid-1990s the RAN Submarine Arm relocated to HMAS Stirling at Rockingham, Western Australia and the responsibility for looking after the K13 memorial fell upon the members of the Submariners' Association – Australia branch members, who were based in the Sydney area (they later formed the Eastern States branch of the Submariners' Association); so the K13 Memorial is in good hands.

As a matter of interest, in January 1964 I was a member of the commissioning crew of the Oberon-class submarine Osiris (S13). We were the very first RN SM to carry the pennant number 13, since the ill-fated K13. We arrived in Faslane in time to attend the K13 annual memorial service and I have always remembered that occasion.

**John Keating**  
Ex-RN, RAN/R  
Australia

I HAVE a brilliant and interesting Naval history.

I volunteered at the age of 15 in May 1956 and I should have gone to boys training but this only came to light halfway through my Collingwood Radio Electrical Mechanic Training, so I completed the course.

In my first ship HMS Armada (a war-time Battle-class destroyer) we visited most of the Mediterranean ports. The highlights were Istanbul and Lebanon. Armada also spent a lot of time around Cyprus; A golden start to my RN career.

After Leading Radio Electrical Mechanic training I volunteered for the Submarine Service. Training included time in HMS Alliance.

I had found my niche and enjoyed my time in boats, with the companionships, many good times and a couple of scary times.

When I was in the submarine HMS Grampus, while under the Arctic ice there was a 'flood, flood flood' alarm. So, with periscopes, engine mast etc still raised, the boat surfaced through 16 foot of ice; damaging all the masts. They could not then be lowered and had to be removed at HMS Dolphin. The irony was that it was not a seawater flood but a burst battery.

HMS Anchorite in the Far East gave much enjoyment, as we were based in Singapore and visited the Philippines, Hong Kong and other Far Eastern ports.

Another scary moment was when an initial trim dive plunged us bow down into the mud 70ft down. The 'Jimmy' had forgotten to adjust the tanks to take into consideration the fuel and stores loaded; continual blowing of bow tubes and ballast tanks finally forced the boat to the surface.

After passing PPE for Petty Officer, I returned to General Service as there were no billets on A-boats and I had to leave the Far East.

I returned for two wonderful years at HMS Mauritius radio station with my family accompanying me. Our younger daughter was born just before Cyclone Gervaise devastated the island.

I also spent time in HMS Chichester visiting Norwegian ports and Iceland; the patrol was just interesting and a bit boring.

Then on HMS Antrim (the guard ship for the Queen) visiting many of the West Indies islands (where we were treated like visiting lords) and the US port of Norfolk Virginia (where the US Naval personnel made us most welcome) and

Washington DC.

The tour was the real highlight of my Naval career; especially meeting the Queen on three occasions.

Upon retirement, accrued leave allowed me and my family time to visit Australia and New Zealand. It was so lucky for all the family to have such fantastic memories.

Then I worked for Ferranti, teaching ship systems at Bracknell.

Next I had an unusual job as I was seconded to Ferranti-Australia Defence

Manufacturer in the Canberra to teach air traffic control systems to engineers.

I then carried out four years of computer weapon system trials, a great coup de grace to my career.

I think I was extremely lucky to be so blessed with such an interesting career.

**Michael Chivers**  
Portsmouth

Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tippie to the writer of our top letter.

This month's winner is **Michael Chivers**



● HMS Antrim provided Michael Chivers with some of his best memories

# My career highlight was Antrim tour

## Fears we have lost too much

THE letter in January's *Navy News* about Malta and how it has changed set me thinking about just how much our Naval heritage has been nibbled away over the years.

Things we would have liked to show and share with our grandchildren but are no longer there.

HMS Ganges at Shotley, where very patient chiefs and POs tried to make sailors out of raw young lads – and mostly succeeded. Gone.

HMS Osprey, at Portland, the main anti-submarine establishment where TAS personnel learned the rudiments and principles of Asdics. Gone.

Portland Dockyard, where the Castle-class frigates were berthed with HMS Maidstone anchored in the harbour. Two or three submarines were berthed alongside, every day going out on exercises. Gone.

HMS Vernon in Portsmouth, the mine and torpedo establishment, where the TAS personnel learned the other half of their trade. Gone.

There were berths for various Naval craft, inshore minesweepers etc, right where Spinnaker Tower is gone. Gone.

I haven't mentioned our shrinking fleet.

The February issue of *Navy News* noted the details of the last hours of our proud and valued search-and-rescue service at Prestwick and Culdrose. Gone.

Yes things must modernise and move on but we have lost so much in the process, tangible, touchable proof that yes, the Navy was there.

May I strongly suggest that we old salts that are still standing pour ourselves a large tot and raise our glasses to the old Navy, old ships and all the good memories that cannot be taken away.

Cheers shipmates.

**Don 'Doc' Livesey**  
Warwickshire

## Let's play the name game

SO the Royal Navy are to have eight Type 26 Global Combat Ships and in the future, five corvettes and maybe four new submarines as a result of the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review.

I was wondering what names they may have.

In the September 2012 issue of *Navy News*, Lt Cdr Lester May wrote about the precedent of letters for different classes.

A for submarines, B Type 22s, C Type 22s stretched. D for the Duke class of Type 23. E for survey ships, following on perhaps F for the Type 26?

The list is endless, Fearless, Fife, Formidable, Foxhound, Frobisher, Fury, Furious, Faulkner, Fishguard or Fareham, to mention a few.

Will the successor submarines be W following on from V class or will they be the B class?

I believe the new corvette class are referred to as the Black Swan class. Maybe it would be a welcome back to some famous names.

Alternatively, how about the suggestion of famous admirals from our rich past? Blackwood, Benbow, Monkton, Hood, Pallister or Shovell to mention a few.

**Frank Evans**  
Leicester

**Martin Franklin**  
Fareham

## Memories of D-Day

I WAS 18 years old and in a landing craft a few days after D-Day in 1944, heading for Courseulles-sur-Mer on the French coast.

I was in Naval Party 1528 and we wore Army uniforms and carried Lee Enfield .303 rifles.

The young man who attended to the engine in the landing craft emerged from below, looked at me and said: "Hello Evans." We were both at Gordons School in West End, Woking, two years before and he was in the Royal Marines.

He could have been the same age as myself. I had not seen him since I had left the boarding school.

We had to jump into the water, waist-deep and make our way ashore holding our rifles above our heads and holding our hammocks above the water.

As we waded ashore, I trod very carefully, feeling with my feet on the undulating sandy seabed in case there were any mines.

I discovered after the war the reason why we had to wade ashore was because the men operating the

landing craft feared getting stuck on the beach.

We spent the first night in a magazine tent, then we moved into a bungalow. There weren't any lights or water. We slept on a concrete floor but we had our hammocks which afforded us a little comfort.

I wrapped my boots in my battledress to make a pillow and I remember thinking that we can expect to rough it because there was a war on. Every night I said my prayers.

On June 19 1,000 bombers flew overhead towards the enemy at Caen. I was standing on a window ledge at the bungalow holding on to the rafters and I saw some of our aeroplanes shot down. One plane came back to the coast, the plane was on fire and a man baled out but his parachute was smoldering and did not open.

They were dangerous but exciting times for me as an 18-year-old volunteer.

**Frank Evans**  
Leicester

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and full address, not necessarily for publication. If you submit a photograph which you did not take please ensure you have permission to use it. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions.



## Reunions

**May 2016**  
HMS Hood Commemoration Service will be held at St John the Baptist Church, Boldre SO41 5PG, at 1100 on May 15. Guest preacher is the Ven Ian Wheatley, Chaplain of the Fleet. Guests include members of the Hood Association led by Rear Admiral Philip Wilcocks, Cdr Keith Evans and Capt Andy Jordan, CO of HMS Collingwood, and Dr Julian Lewis MP, Chairman of the Defence Select Committee. Members of the congregation are encouraged to wear their decorations. A warm invitation is extended for refreshments after the service.

HMS Hood Association AGM at 1500 and reunion dinner 1900 at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth on May 21. Service at St Ann's Church, Portsmouth Naval Base, at 1000, May 22. On May 24 there will be a commemorative service in the Victory Arena at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard with Hood's bell as the centrepiece, incorporating the 75th anniversary of the sinking of HMS Hood on May 24 1941, an action in which 1415 personnel died. For details of all these events contact chairman Keith Evans on 01428 642122.

**June 2016**  
HMS Raleigh, Anson 24s: Did you walk through the gates of Raleigh on June 8 1976 during that long hot summer to become a Royal Navy Communicator, or do you know someone who did? If so, we are hoping to hold a reunion 40 years on at the Union Jack Club, London, on June 10. If your memory stretches back that far then get in touch with Lez Greening at [lezgreening@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lezgreening@yahoo.co.uk) (tel 07951 920489) or [mejune24@hotmail.com](mailto:mejune24@hotmail.com) (tel 07969 545088) or [Robert.Chapman@bank-abc.com](mailto:Robert.Chapman@bank-abc.com) (tel 07831 352092).

RM Chefs Branch Reunion: The 27th annual Chefs Branch reunion is being held at the Gainsborough Hotel, Bewdley Hill, Kidderminster DY11 6BS, from June 24-26. All serving and former RM and RN Chefs who served with the Corps are invited to attend. The invitation is extended to former butchers and ration storemen. Entertainment includes a 'Step back to the 40s', a light-hearted journey back to wartime Britain held on the Severn Valley Railway. Details from Ron Hedicker at [rhedicker@live.co.uk](mailto:rhedicker@live.co.uk)

**July 2016**  
The Fiskard Association annual Up Spirits and Sods Opera featuring Shep Woolley at the Royal Maritime Club on July 1 with July 2 seeing a visit to the Fiskard Museum, HMS Sultan and the Green and White Dinner Dance at the WO & SRs Mess, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth. For more information contact Mike Bell for Up-Spirits & Sods Opera at [mick\\_bell@hotmail.com](mailto:mick_bell@hotmail.com) or tel 07889 662477 and for the dinner dance contact Bradley at [bradleys@moutpleasantcottage.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:bradleys@moutpleasantcottage.wanadoo.co.uk) or check <http://thefiskardassociation.org>, or see the Fiskardian.

Royal Marines Signals and Telecommunications Bi-annual Reunion: Information/registration point outside Signals Store open from 0830, all to be seated in the Falklands Hall, CTCRM, by 1000 on July 16. This is open to ALL Ranks of both specialisations. If you were/are a serving member and would like to attend or would like further information, contact Signals Specialisation Advisor (WO1 Nick Wilson RM) on 01392 414089 or email [navytrgctorm-ldgrsigwto1@](mailto:navytrgctorm-ldgrsigwto1@)

Entries for the Deaths and Reunions columns, and for Swap Drafts, in May's Noticeboard must be received by **April 11**

### NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

- Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to – The Editor, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY, or email: [edit@navynews.co.uk](mailto:edit@navynews.co.uk). If you are sending your notice via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
- Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.
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## Deaths

ADMIRAL Sir William O'Brien. Attended Dartmouth 1930, becoming a Cadet Captain and gaining four months' seniority receiving first-class passes in every exam while training. His first command was a lorry-mounted gun during the Arab revolt in Palestine 1936. 1938-39 Navigating Officer of HMS Garland during the Spanish Civil War. 1940 took part in Operation Royal Marine, sowing mines and improvising tank traps in the Rhine, Meuse, Moselle and Seine, often while under machine-gun fire. He was First Lieutenant of HMS Witherington, escorting Atlantic and East Coast convoys, then First Lieutenant of destroyer Offa escorting convoys to Russia. During a raid on the German-occupied Norwegian Vaagso Island the German patrol ship Donner was boarded and cryptographic material was captured. Offa was also part of the close escort for Convoy PQ17 and PQ18 in 1942 and was awarded the DSC. Commanded Cottesmore in the North Sea and English Channel 1943 and 1944, and was anchored off Gold Beach bombarding German batteries as the 50th Northumberland Division landed. Mentioned in dispatches for courage, efficiency and devotion to duty in opening the Rangoon River (Malaya) to navigation prior to the landings in May 1945. He joined the newly-established Petty Officer Leadership School 1946. After commanding frigate Venus he was Staff Officer (Intelligence) on the staff of CinC Med, 2ic of HMS Ceylon 1953; chief staff officer to the Flag Officer, Flotillas, in the Med during the Suez Crisis; Captain 8th Destroyer Squadron in HMS Cheviot in the Far East 1958-60; deputy director of joint planning 1960-61 and commanded aircraft carrier Hermes 1961-63. Promoted to rear-admiral 1964 he became Naval Secretary. 1966 he became Flag Officer Aircraft Carriers, hoisting his flag in carrier Eagle in Singapore. 1967 he became Commander Far East Fleet for the withdrawal from Aden. His final appointment was CinC Western Fleet responsible as the British withdrew from East of Suez. Chairman of King George's Fund for Sailors for 12 years and Rear Admiral and later Vice Admiral of the United Kingdom, honorary and ceremonial appointments in the gift of the Queen. Appointed CB 1966 and KCB 1969. Former President of ARNO. Feb 19. Aged 99.

Sir George Martin FAA. Joined as a 17-year-old and trained as an observer, he spent four years in the Fleet Air Arm late in WW2 and into the first few months of peacetime flying in Swordfish, amongst other aircraft. He left the FAA 1947 to pursue his love of music, becoming 'the fifth Beatle' and a legendary record producer. He remained a staunch supporter of his wartime aviation comrades, acting as Vice Patron of the Channel Dash Association. In 2010 he and his wife spent the day at RNAS Yeovilton with the RN Historic Flight as the BBC filmed a documentary on the producer's life. March 8. Aged 90.

Capt Eric 'Winkle' Brown. As a student teacher at Schule Schloss Salem in Germany he learnt to fly in the University Air Squadron. 1939 war broke out and he was escorted to the Swiss border by the SS. When he returned to Britain he volunteered for the Fleet Air Arm. His first operational appointment was 802 NAS flying from the escort carrier Audacity, providing fighter protection to North Atlantic convoys where he was awarded the DSC for his bravery and skill in action against enemy aircraft. Audacity was torpedoed and sunk 1941 and he was one of only two survivors among the aircrew. 1944-50 he was chief naval test pilot at Royal Aircraft Establishment, commanding officer Enemy Aircraft Flight and commanding officer Aerodynamics Flight. 1949 he was granted a permanent commission in the Royal Navy. During the Korean War in the 1950s he was lent to the US Naval Test Centre in Maryland, where he introduced to the US Navy the then-new British concept of the angled flight deck. 1954 he was given command of 804 NAS and in 1957 he returned to Germany to train up the new German naval air arm to NATO standards. Promoted to captain 1957 he served in the Admiralty as deputy director Naval Air Warfare helping to obtain the McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom fighter and Blackburn Buccaneer low-level bomber for the Fleet Air Arm. He served as naval attaché in Bonn 1965-67 and commanded RNAS Lossiemouth 1967-70 retiring 1970 when he was appointed CBE. He flew 487 different types of aircraft, made 2,407 deck landings at sea and 2,721 take-offs. Feb 21. Aged 97. See page 17 for a more in-depth report.

Cdr Peter J Russell. HMS Drake, Nelson, St Angelo, Warrior, Forth, Mercury, Eagle, Wizard, Saker, President, Newfoundland, Agincourt and MOD DNT. Feb 4. Aged 88.

Cdr John 'Johnny' T Rawlins. Volunteered for Fleet Air Arm and joined NO 24 Pilots Course; he flew solo after eight hours and was awarded his wings May 1952. Joined 803 NAS and was the youngest jet pilot at sea. He saw action during the Suez Crisis. 1958 when he flew a Sea Venom of 892 NAS from HMS Eagle. 1962-64 as Flight Deck Officer in HMS Hermes during bad weather in the Channel he was blown over by the blast of a jet engine and fell 70ft into the sea with no lifejacket – Hermes was steaming away at 30 knots. He was hauled from the water by helicopter. 1965 he rescued two wounded Royal Marines from the Radfan Mountains whilst embarked in HMS Albion, flying a Wessex V of 848 NAS, and was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct. He was in Borneo to support Commonwealth forces resisting Konfrontasi, the assault by Sukarno's Indonesia on Malaysia.1967-68 he commanded 771 NAS training crews in search and rescue. He commanded 845 NAS 1970-72 then was 'Wings' at RNAS

Cdr Peter J Russell. HMS Drake, Nelson, St Angelo, Warrior, Forth, Mercury, Eagle, Wizard, Saker, President, Newfoundland, Agincourt and MOD DNT. Feb 4. Aged 88.

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### Talking Navy News

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Yeovilton. Commanded RN Historic Flight, learning to fly the Swordfish. Seconded to the RAN, Canberra in 1974, and later transferred. Organised 75th anniversary Air Day at Nowra, NSW, in 1986. He logged 3,572 military flying hours and flew 24 types of aircraft. Jan 29. Aged 83.

Cdr Brian E Rowley. HMS Antrim, Devonshire, Hermes, Heron, Osprey, Victory RNB, Snr Inst JOAC, MOD Aircraft Dept Naval, Defence Op Analysis Estates W Byfleet, RNLO HQBF Cyprus and Eastern Area SCC. Jan 18.

Cdr John M Shrivies. CinC Naval Home Command, HMS Vernon, Nelson, Centurion, Heron, Gannet, Blackcap, Saker, Osprey, Seahawk, Redpole, Daedalus and 829 and 849 NAS. Jan 29. Aged 84.

Lt Cdr Lionel T H Johnson RD RNR. HMS Westcott, Teazer, Dipper, Blackcap, Heron, 897 and 899 NAS. Dec 17. Aged 93.

Lt Cdr Robert P Selley RNR. 835 NAS. Dec.

Lt Cdr Peter R Wellings ARRC. HMS Nelson, Royal Arthur, Centurion, RN Hospitals Haslar and Plymouth. Feb 29. Aged 69.

Lt Ron Davidson. 890, 803 and 893 NAS. Jan.

Lt John D Sutton RNRV DSO. Feb 19. Aged 97.

Lt Barry E Woodhouse RM. 737, 750, 771 and 814 NAS. Feb 15. Aged 73.

Lt Cdr W Paul Jewell. Served 1949-81 in HMS Vanguard, Birmingham, Eagle, RNEC Manadon and Cambridge. March 3. Aged 84.

Charles Kerry Bagshaw RM. Joined 1961 and served in the Radfan Campaign. Selected for officer training 1964. Served in 45 Cdo twice (injured both times) before serving in 40 Cdo in Singapore (Konfrontasi). Joined the Special Boat Section 1967, 1970 took command of 3 Special Boat Detachment. 1974 joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. A gifted all-round athlete and boxer, he represented the Navy. Nov 11. Aged 72.

Graham 'Fingers' Taylor OS Gunner. Served 1962-86 in HMS Loch Fada in Far East (63-64), Victorious, Rothesay, Centaur, Torquay, Amazon (1st Commission), Active and Avenger (Falklands); also Cambridge, Excellent and Dryad/Collingwood as Type 21 gunnery instructor. HMS Loch Fada Association & Gunnery Instructors Association. Jan 29. Aged 69.

Leonard 'Len' George Pomphrey CPO(MEM). Served 1967-89 at HMS Raleigh then Bulwark, Wolverton, Llandaff (world deployment 75-76), Avenger, Antelope (Falklands War 82) – sunk by Argentinian bomb he was repatriated in the QE2. After survivors' leave drafted back to the war zone spending six months in hospital ship HMS Hecate, ferrying casualties to Uruguay, then Drake, Raleigh, Illustrious and Danae. Feb 7. Aged 66.

Brian 'Fred' Cairns CPOE. Education Team in HMS Belfast. Dec.

Thomas 'Tom' Barnden CEL(A). Served 1948-70 at Royal Arthur, Ariel (Worthy Down), Gamecock, Heron, Peregrine, Illustrious, Indomitable, Landrail, Gannet, Falcon, Seahawk, Victorious. Daedalus branch Fleet Air Arm Association. Jan 28.

Nicholas 'Nick' E Southward CPO. Served 1965-81. HMS Fiskard (\$55 Hawke Division), Carysfort, Berwick, Diomedé (Cod War '76), Eskimo, Collingwood, Pembroke, Warrior (CinC Fleet), Dolphin, Neptune and Cochrane. March 8. Aged 67.

Kenneth A Hardman POEA. Served 1943-46. Chatham then LST3020 in the Far East. March 4. Aged 91.

David Jenkinson Elec Eng. Served 1947-54 at Chatham and Collingwood, also in HMS Chequers, Superb, Forth and MMS 17 & 72. Feb 13. Aged 86.

Phillip 'Nick' Goodbody AB. Served 1943-47 HMS Royal Arthur, Glendower, Collingwood, Victory, Kildary, Golden Hind, Apollo, Gould and Bonaventure. Royal British Legion (Park Gate). Dec 28. Aged 89.

Lionel 'Bugsy' Bugden OA1. Served 1959-81. Loch Fada (62-63) in Far East, Devonshire, Tyne, Otter, Stalker and Finwhale. Loch Fada Association. Feb 11. Aged 79.

Trevor Walker PO Wtr. Served Ark Royal (60-61) and Loch Fada (66-67) Far East and home for final decommissioning. HMS Loch Fada Association. 2015.

Leonard 'Doc' Green Medic. Served WW2. Joined RN Medics with his teenage experience of St John Ambulance. Served HM Hospital Haslar, HMS Lancaster Castle on Arctic and North Atlantic convoys, Murmansk and the Far East; also six months in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Member of disbanded Castle Class Corvette Association. Nov 21. Aged 89.

Royal Naval Association  
Paul Frederick Ashwell PO. Served 1938-53. Boy 2nd Class HMS Gangs then Pembroke, Arethusa (Russian & Malta convoys), Woolwich, Nile (Hyacinth & Mosquito), St Angelo, MLs, Pembroke (Attack, Hornet, Fervent, Osprey, Nimrod). Vigo, Phoenixia, Vernon & Superb. Life member of Letchworth & Hitchin branch. Nov 1. Aged 92.

James 'Jim' Hayes AB. Ex-Army. Served 1940-46 mostly on minesweepers in the Channel and North Sea. Buxton & High Peak RNA. Aged 93.

Albert 'Bert' Symonds Cpl RM. Served WW2 taking part in D-Day (Gold Beach) and post-WW2 in RM Reserves. First branch standard bearer Alesford RNA. Legion D'Honneur. Dec 25. Aged 95.

James 'Jimmy' White AB. WW2 veteran served in both Arctic convoys on board HMS Trumpeter (US-built escort carrier) and D-Day landings (as a trooper). Alesford RNA. Dec 25. Aged 92.

Kenneth 'Ken' MacNally LME. Served 1954-62 in HMS Kenya, Newfoundland, PS Admirante Graue and HMS Protector. North Manchester RNA and HMS Newfoundland Association. Jan. Aged 78.

Paul 'Steve' Stevens. Ex- HMS St George, Isle of Man. Feb 9. Aged 90.

Bryan Eastwood CPO FAA. Joined HMS Gangs from Arethusa and served for 22 years at various naval air stations and in several carriers. Instructor at Daedalus. March RNA. Feb 15. Aged 75.

George Duke. Cheshunt branch. Feb 27. Aged 84.

Peter Seale Sto/Mech. Served 1947-54 in HMS St George, Imperieuse, Surprise and Dampier. Eastbourne branch. March 5.

Aged 87.

George Drury LRO. Served HMS Indefatigable. City of Glasgow branch. Aged 90.

### Association of RN Officers and RNOC

Rear Admiral Derek G Satow CB. Chief Naval Engineer Officer, Naval Secretary, MOD DG Ships, DGW and Naval Ordnance Dept, RNEC Manadon and HMS Newcastle. Feb 10. Aged 92.

Cdre Charles R Sims. MOD Defence Int Staff, NATO North Atlantic Military Committee, AUWE, HMS Reclaim, Sea Eagle, Terror, Vernon and Underwater Weapons Material Dept. Feb 3. Aged 97.

Cdr Eric C Poynton. HMS Osprey, Rooke, Collingwood, Hampshire, Bulwark, Newcastle, Excellent and MOD DG Weapons. Feb 15. Aged 85.

Cdr Michael T Usher. HMS Rhyll, Collingwood, Excellent, Girdle Ness, President, Camperdown, MOD DG Weapons and Ministry of Technology. Feb 5. Aged 90.

Cdr D A A Willis. HMS Heron, Collingwood, Osprey, Daedalus, Cerberus, President, Apollo, Excellent, NATO and MOD DGNM. Feb 16. Aged 93.

Lt Cdr Peter J G Harper. 815, 826 and 706 NAS, HMS Ark Royal, Seahawk, Eagle, Centurion, Saker and Boscombe Down. Jan 29. Aged 72.

Lt Cdr John R 'Dick' Pryce Jones. HMS Bulwark, Sirius, Danae, Warrior, Kent, Yarrton, London Div RNR. Feb 20. Aged 67.

2/O WRNS Elspeth H Scott. HMS Cochrane, President and Drake. March.

### Submariners Association

Pete Bailey AB RP2. Served 1944-47 in HM Submarines Upshot and Varne. Brierley Hill branch. Feb 4. Aged 90

Basil Backhouse REL Mech. Served 1961-72 in HM Submarines Onslaught (62-63), Grampus (66-67), Renown (67-70) and Swiftsure (70-72). Beds & Herts branch. Feb 4. Aged 77.

George Woodward Sto Mech. Served 1943-46 in HM Submarines H33 (43), Thule (43-44) and Tabard (45). North Staffs branch. Feb 6. Aged 91.

Mike Southward FCO Coxn. Served 1959-80 in HM Submarines Scotsman, Amphion, Tabard, Trump, Narwhal, Otter, Otus, Ocelot and Revenge. West of Scotland branch. Feb 29. Aged 77.

Lt Cdr C J 'Percy' Pike. Served in HM Submarines Artful, Alliance, Turpin, Artemis and Alaric; Collingwood GS. Nov at home in France. Aged 75.

Cyril Platt CPOME. WW2 submariner. Served in HM Submarines Upshot, Tally Ho, Truncheon, Sea Scout, Thermopylae, Scythian, Alderney, Thule, Turpin and Acheron. Portsmouth branch. January. Aged 90.

### Algerines Association

Richard Morrison-Story AB Radar. Served 1943-44 in HMS Orestes and Ready.

Victor P J Spring AB. Served 1944-46 in HMS Tanganyika.

Leslie T Campbell Sto. Served 1946 in HMS Chameleon.

William E Pettitt AB RP3. Served 1945-47 in HMS Romola.

Anthony Cobb PO Tel. Served 1944-46 in HMS Providence. Jan 8.

Thomas Alfred 'Ted' Heath AB. Served 1950-53 in HMS Jaseur and Lysander. Dec 19. Aged 84.

Alfred W Ellington AB MD3. Served 1950-53 in HMS Jaseur. Dec 29. Aged 84.

Brian Spong AB. Served 1945-46 in HMS Orcadia and Mystic. Jan 15.

Archibald Mitchell ERA. Served 1944-45 in HMS Cadmus. Jan 16. Aged 91.

Walter Taplin SM. Served 1947 in HMS Tanganyika. Feb 2. Aged 87.

Walter J Hayhurst Tel. Served 1950-53 in HMS Rosamund and Myrmidon. 2015.

Edward 'Ted' Turner RM. March 18. Aged 92.

### The Orion Association

Gerald Forss Supply Assistant on board 1946-48. 2015.

Colin M Wigmore PO Radio Mech on board HMS Orion 1943-45. Dec 4.

Reg Russell. Served in Plymouth Reserve Fleet 1950-51. Dec 19.

Peter Wynne-James. 2015.

Aubrey J Holmes Telegraphist TO onboard 1941. W. Australia 2015.

Edward E Finlayson AB Seaman on board 1943-46. Jan 25.

## Ask Jack

Donald Edward Macdonald Hardie: Did you know Donald (Don), who served in the FAA at Lossiemouth, Cudroze and Singapore? He also took part in the Field Gun Run at the Royal Tournament around 1969, taking 29 of his Navy friends along for support. He was also part of the parade when Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia visited the UK. I believe he travelled to Singapore on HMS Hermes. He served from 1953 to 1971, finishing as CPO AM. If you knew him, contact his daughter, Lisa Edwards, at [lisas37.le@gmail.com](mailto:lisas37.le@gmail.com) or 07722 565405 as she would like to arrange a surprise reunion with some of his former shipmates.

HMS Ark Royal: Peter Ewer is looking for photographs of HMS Ark Royal 09, post-1960s refit with the full angled deck, to help build an 8ft model of HMS Ark Royal. He is looking for pictures that show the hull, flight deck, island, radar and aerials. You can contact Peter at [peter@theewers.co.uk](mailto:peter@theewers.co.uk) or tel 01243 544291.

HMS Hermes: Having served in Hermes in 1960-61 as a Reserve officer, I am putting together a small archive of the ship (including Tony Dyson's book) for one of my grandsons. Alas my souvenir cap tally has gone astray and I wonder if anyone has a spare one they are willing to part with. Will gladly pay any reasonable amount. Contact Alex Mackenzie at [alexpatmac@gmail.com](mailto:alexpatmac@gmail.com) or tel 0208 876 4003.

PO Jan Pack: Mark Quince served in the RN between 1976 and 2002, leaving as CPO(AEM). Having watched some of the recent TV series on HMS Raleigh, it brought back some fond memories. He joined Raleigh, class B76/17M on October 19 1976 and his instructor for the six weeks was PO Jan Pack. It got him thinking about PO Pack, wondering where he may be. If anyone has any news on PO Pack or he reads this, contact Mark at [m\\_quince1@btinternet.com](mailto:m_quince1@btinternet.com) or tel 01522 789655.

# Jutland 100 – digital and actual events

AN IMPRESSIVE interactive map created by historians shows the terrible human cost of the Navy's biggest 20th Century battle for the first time.

Produced for the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Jutland at the end of May, the computerised map and database lists the 6,000-plus Royal Navy casualties of the titanic clash between the British and German fleets in the North Sea in 1916.

Fully searchable by the name of a sailor, ship, memorial or some of the schools they attended – such as the Royal Hospital School in Suffolk – the map/database has been put together by the National Museum of the Royal Navy with the help of more than a dozen volunteers.

They spent more than two years ferreting out the relevant details from official records – which in many cases are quite scant: service number, age, family details, home address and ship and, on rare occasions, photographs.

The resulting map shows that there was scarcely a town or district untouched by the hand of Death at Jutland, from 19-year-old reservist Thomas



# From flying machine to the silver screen

UNLIKE the flurry of books accompanying the Great War centenary (we're expecting a flood of Verdun/Somme/Jutland tomes this year alone, for example), the end of dedicated SAR missions by the military hasn't really excited publishers beyond the specialist realm.

So hats off to Adlard Coles, who agreed to publish the memoirs of Jerry Grayson – *Rescue Pilot: Cheating the Sea* (£8.99 ISBN 978-1-4729-17942) – a lively, at times exciting, at others laugh-out-loud funny account of the SAR world four decades ago.

In fact, *Rescue Pilot* is less a memoir than a collection of nearly 20 extended anecdotes or snapshots of life, mostly focusing on the author's career as a Fleet Air Arm helicopter pilot from 1972 to 1980.

Jerry began his front-line career pinging from HMS Ark Royal in the then relatively-new Sea Kings and, later, acting as plane guard in a very old Wessex Mk1 – “the best seat in the house for one of the most dramatic shows you could ever hope to see.”

The author was involved in the true story behind Tom Clancy's blockbuster novel (and subsequent film) *Hunt for Red October* (but only realised it 25 years later) – following the actions on radar of a Soviet warship captain who went rogue... and was promptly chased down by the Red Air Force.

For despite the title, *Rescue Pilot* is much more than ‘just’ the life of a Royal Navy SAR flier in the late 70s; a good third of the book is devoted to life away from the red/blue helicopters (the livery of the day before red and grey became the dominant paint scheme in the late 80s).

It's a window on the Fleet Air Arm and RN of the day – from attitudes towards senior officers and questionable decisions taken by Whitehall mandarins, to the eye-opening world of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and its acceptance of homosexuality at sea long before the broader general public, and 30 years before the military lifted its ban.

But there is also much in these memoirs which resonates with today's – or rather tomorrow's – FAA operations. With the arrival of the Queen Elizabeth class, plane guards are returning as are deployments by anti-submarine helicopter squadrons protecting the carrier battlegroup; Exercise Deep Blue breathed fresh life into the concept back in 2014 (and Deep Blue 2 later this year will do the same again).

The author hated such protracted anti-submarine exercises – ten days of ‘rippling’, as it's known, left crews utterly exhausted. Still, it wasn't as bad as a draft as an instructor at (the now closed) air station at Portland. He hated the job and, above all, hated the place. “You should go. You'll come away being really glad that you live somewhere else.”

When he joined the RN in 1972, his goal as a pilot was to fly search-and-rescue missions. He got the chance with the trusty Wessex of 771 NAS in Culdrose in the late '70s.

Life in SAR world “wasn't the real Navy, thank God”. Banter. A general omission of formalities. A ‘band of brothers’ bond between aircrew who knew each other's actions and reactions instinctively.

Given the gravity of many of Jerry's rescue missions – this is not Hollywood, not everyone survives – you might expect his memoirs to be a tad dark.

Not a bit of it. His writing style is light and engaging – *Rescue Pilot* is aimed at the general reader, not the aviation buff. There are tales of flying red Morris Marinas, training exercises over nudist beaches (“it was rare to see anybody under about 60 lounging around in the sunshine” Jerry laments) and a woman who was rescued when stuck on a sandbank (and furious that the fliers didn't save her new shoes as well).

And having been branded ‘ace’ by a young lad rescued from a Cornish cliff, Jerry hoped that would become his nickname. Not a chance. A few days later, his Wessex saved a cow which had slipped down a cliff; the creature was dubbed ‘Jerry Ace Grayson’.

And at the opposite end of the rescue scale, just a few weeks later, the pilot was on duty during 1979's calamitous Fastnet Race – which he'd barely heard of, but then few beyond the yachting community had until a near-hurricane battered competitors.

From the never-ending radio chatter – from yachtsmen crying for assistance and aircrews scrambling from Culdrose – the author quickly realised the scale of the disaster, reinforced over the Atlantic by the sight of “incredible” seas – “every wave was bigger than the last.”

Fifteen Fastnet sailors owe their lives to Jerry and his crew, five from the Magic, the rest from the Golden Apple.

The first day of the Fastnet rescue, the Wessex and Sea Kings had collectively clocked up nearly 80 flying hours and saved 73 souls. The operation continued for three more days, mostly checking the various abandoned craft for signs of life.

After eight years in the FAA, Jerry struck out into civvy street, eventually becoming one of the go-to-guys for Hollywood and broadcasters when they needed aerial footage of major sporting Olympics from the winter games in Sarajevo back in 1984 to the 2010 World Cup in South Africa... or the popular 80s adventure show *Treasure Hunt* which had jump-suited presenter Anneka Rice dashing around the country by helicopter solving puzzles.

Jerry's expertise – and that of the firm he subsequently founded with his now partner Sara, Helifilms – is behind aerial scenes from a string of movies: *Black Hawk Down*, *Transformers*, *Harry Potter*, *Star Trek*.

And being a former naval officer, well he couldn't turn down the chance to film the climactic scene in a Bond film – Roger Moore's last outing, *A View to a Kill*.

It closed with 007 clashing with the villain, played by Christopher Walken, atop the Golden Gate Bridge after his airship crashed into the iconic San Francisco crossing (all perfectly normal...).

Sounds if not idyllic, then exotic and certainly far-flung. The sequence was actually filmed over the Channel somewhere off Selsey. California was added in later.

■ Thanks to Adlard Coles, we have four copies of *Rescue Pilot* to give away to our readers.

To win, tell us the name of the playing card featured on 771 NAS helicopters which gave the squadron its nickname.

Send your entry to [rescuepilot@navynews.co.uk](mailto:rescuepilot@navynews.co.uk) or Rescue Pilot Competition, Navy News, Mail Point 1-4, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.

Entries must be received by mid-day on Friday May 13 2016.

## Win the Sea King manual

TO MARK the end of both the Jungle and SAR Sea Kings, Haynes have kindly given us five copies of their manual on the great helicopter to give away.

We reviewed Lee Howard's *Westland Sea King: Owners' Workshop Manual* (£25, ISBN 978-0-85733-5050), very favourably in our October 2015 edition; it's not just a technical book, for it features first-hand accounts from SAR crew (the publication focuses on the Mk5 search-and-rescue model).

Lee's working on the final stages of a follow-up, a similar manual focusing on the various maritime forms of the Lynx which is

due out later this year (while the helicopter itself is due out of service in 2017).

If you can't wait that long... or don't fancy spending £25... and can tell us the name of the peninsula in Iraq which Sea Kings flew commandos into during the first wave of the 2003 war against Saddam Hussein, then you might win a copy of Lee's Sea King book.

Send your entry to [seeking@navynews.co.uk](mailto:seeking@navynews.co.uk) or Sea King Competition, Navy News, Mail Point 1-4, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.

Entries must be received by mid-day on Friday May 13 2016.



# Reflecting on Victory

BRIAN Lavery is one of the leading experts on the Navy of the Napoleonic period. He has also written important works on more recent periods – and is therefore uniquely qualified to write a comprehensive history of HMS Victory from its beginnings in the mid-18th Century to its position as an iconic relic today.

All aspects are covered in **Nelson's Victory** (Seaforth, £30 ISBN 978 1 84832 2325): design, construction and maintenance as well as the operational history of the ship. This is skilfully placed in a wider historical context. The story of Nelson is also interwoven with the history of his most famous flagship to produce a unique and most useful volume, writes Prof Eric Grove.

Victory had its beginnings at the end of 1758 during the Seven Years War with France when the Admiralty decided to build a new first-rate 100-gun ship of the line at Chatham dockyard. Her construction was delayed by the requirement for her diminishing as a result of British victories in fleet actions and the post-war need to repair ships home from the wars.

Victory, the largest ship in the fleet, was floated out of the dry dock in which she had been built on May 7 1765. She immediately went into ‘ordinary’ – ie reserve – in the Medway. It was not until the likelihood of war with France in 1778 as a result of the American rebellion that she was placed in service. It was a task not without difficulty given shortages of dockyard personnel and seamen. Finally on May 8 she began her first voyage under sail to join the Channel Fleet at Portsmouth as Admiral Keppel's flagship. Victory played a leading role off Ushant in the indecisive battle that led to the damaging Keppel/Palliser controversy.

Victory continued to fly the Channel Fleet commander's flag under the indifferent Admirals Hardy, Geary and Darby. Eventually more competent leadership appeared in the shape of Lord Howe. Victory's own capabilities were much improved when she was coppered in 1780 preventing serious growth of marine life on the hull, so increasing her speed. She was flagship for the relief of Gibraltar in 1782.

Peace meant more time in ordinary, this time in Portsmouth. Victory was found to be in need of extensive repair, no less than £37,523 being spent on her by 1788 – over half her original cost. Keeping wooden ships in good condition was – and is – an expensive business. Crises

## THE GROVE REVIEW

with Spain and Russia caused her to return to service. Further refit work was required before she went to the Mediterranean Fleet on the outbreak of war with France, flying the flag of Lord Samuel Hood. She was involved in the operations that temporarily took the French base at Toulon.

After withdrawing, the Fleet supported independence forces in Corsica, operations in which Nelson – captain of HMS Agamemnon – lost the sight of an eye. Hood and Victory, both worn out returned to Portsmouth at the end of 1794 before “the unlucky and indecisive” Admiral Hotham's indecisive action in March 1795.

By July, 1795, however Victory was back on station. Hotham did not choose her as flagship; typically, he preferred the slower Britannia. When he was replaced in November by Admiral Sir John Jervis, the flag returned to Victory. As Spain joined France, Jervis was forced to withdraw to Gibraltar at the end of 1796. February 1797, however, saw the great victory over the Spanish fleet off Cape St Vincent. Although the main facilitator of the triumph was Nelson in HMS Captain, the flagship had some share of the action also, notably raking the large Spanish ship Principe De Asturias.

Jervis, now Earl St Vincent, was worried about the state of his “trembly and leaky” flagship and sent her back to Chatham. She was reduced to a hospital ship and narrowly escaped permanent use as a static hulk. However, the accidental loss of two first rates in 1799-1800, saved her and extensive work began in dry dock to return Victory to service. She was floated out again in April 1803, and fitted out and rearmed, rejoined the fleet on May 16, two days before the declaration of a new war on France. That very day Admiral Lord Nelson hoisted his flag in Victory as C-inC Mediterranean Fleet. This would be the apotheosis of the careers of both.

The story now becomes well known. The long blockade in the Mediterranean; the pursuit of the combined Franco-Spanish fleet across the Atlantic and back and finally its annihilation at Trafalgar. The author adds much detail about the flagship's crew and life on board. Useful things emerge, not least

Capt Hardy's over use of the lash to maintain discipline. This atypical situation in a key ship is probably a major cause of the ‘black legend’ of the Georgian Navy that has only

quite recently been put right. One wonders why it was necessary given Nelson's clear popularity on the lower deck. Despite Nelson's obvious faith in his flag captain the latter seems to have had a serious problem. It seems a pity that the musket ball that took down Nelson did not come out of the Frenchman's musket at a slightly different angle.

Victory was reduced to a second rate in 1807 with 18 rather than 24-pounders on the middle deck and new and smaller masts. She continued, however, to play a key role as the flagship of Admiral Sir James Saumarez in the Baltic as he pursued an admirable policy of subtle naval diplomacy that could not have been bettered, and which the author describes clearly and well.

At the war's end Victory began her long years of static service afloat in Portsmouth Harbour as flagship of C-in-C Portsmouth. She was partially modernised and remained a potential fighting ship for a while. Attempts to cut her down as an 84-gun two-decker were opposed in a press campaign in which Victory's historical importance was emphasised. So she remained more or less unchanged as a floating depot ship. “By the 1850s Victory was now limbo between a fighting ship and a much valued relic.” The latter role began to predominate and she was reduced to a tender in 1869, both as a reception ship for boys and a tourist attraction.

The author describes the activities of the Society for Nautical Research in finally saving the Victory and returning her to Trafalgar condition.

So the historic ship was put into dry dock where she remains today. Given the author's full descriptions of her previous repairs I was a little surprised that he does not provide a full description of the massive works recently embarked upon. This is my only real criticism of a book that is a true masterpiece that only Brian Lavery could have achieved.

*Nelson's Victory* is beautifully illustrated, excellent value at £30 and yet another major achievement for the prolific Seaforth.







● Above: The women's set pieces worked well in their match against HM Prison Service  
Picture: David Martin

● Below: It is difficult to tell who is playing for which team as Fairbrother tries to avoid a tackle as the Senior XV play Hampshire RFC  
Picture: John Walton



**THREE Royal Navy rugby union sides are in action on April 30 – with the most prestigious game at Twickenham as the Royal Navy Senior XV face the Army in front of a sell-out crowd of 82,000.**

The RNRU Women and the RNRU Mariners face the Army Women and Army Masters teams at nearby Kneller Hall.

Captain Ben Priddey has led the seniors out on six occasions to win convincingly against Blackheath, Cambridge University, Esher, Oxford University, Richmond, and Hampshire.

They have been in camp at Fort Blockhouse, where head coach Ash Coates, has been putting the team through their paces.

The Senior XV Training Support Group has been given a boost with the addition of a guest coach for the forwards, in the shape of the Scotland and Saracens player Kelly Brown.

Kelly has been able to bring on some of the less-experienced forwards who have flourished under his tutelage.

The conditions have often been testing, with February and March seeing more than an



● Kelly Brown, left, has been coaching the Senior VX

average amount of rainfall, it has sometimes been difficult to tell the opposing teams apart by the end of the matches as the players have been coated in mud.

The team face their final opposition, Devon RFC, on April 13 at Plymouth Albion RFC and the RAF at USSG Portsmouth on April 20.

The women's team have seen some key changes in their management and coaching teams. Lt Cdr Lynne Martin is assistant director of rugby, and Sub Lt Jane West is the new manager.

WO1 'George' Hillan has moved across from the Mariners, to become head coach and Lt Charlotte Frederickson is the new captain.

The rejuvenated team has also recruited a number of new players. With wins against Yeovil, HM Prison Service and Portsmouth, the team are hoping to continue their winning run.

And with a training camp arranged in Liverpool later this month, the ladies have time to consolidate their skills prior to the Inter-Service matches.

The Mariners have also seen

some key changes at the top. Cdr Jon Holroyd is the new assistant director of rugby, and has been joined by C/Sgt Elvet Williams, fresh from his success with the Royal Marines rugby team.

Keen to defend their 2015 Inter-Service title, the Mariners have a healthy number of players from which to select their squad. Captain LAET Guy Pallet has led his team to wins against Devonport Services and Havant, however they fared less well against HMS Heron.

Unlike the seniors and the women, the Mariners do not travel to France but have remained in the UK to face HM Prison Service and Torbay Sharks as their final preparation before they kick off the start of the Navy v RAF Rugby matches at HMS Temeraire on April 20 at 10.30am.

The three teams will play one after the other, with the women on at 1.30pm, followed by the Seniors at 6pm. Entry is free.

All tickets for the Army v Navy Match at Twickenham have sold out but the match will be televised live on Sky Sports, kicking off at 3pm.

Go to the RNRU webpage at [www.navyrugbyunion.co.uk](http://www.navyrugbyunion.co.uk) or follow us on Twitter @RNRugby #GoNavy.

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## Nordics turn up the heat

THE Armed Forces Hockey Association Nordics beat the RAF 2-1 at RAF Halton.

The Nordics took a 30-minute lead through Air Marshal Greg Bagwell, president of the opposition, following a pass from John O'Farrell.

For the next five minutes the RAF threw everything at the Nordics' goal, with the athletic heroics of Adrian Portlock, chairman of RAF Hockey, keeping them out.

The hockey was twice as good in the second half, with Nordics' former Navy debutant Paul Wicker making the score 2-0.

The RAF kept pressing and were rewarded with a consolation goal from Dave Sellers just before the final whistle.

This is the 96th year since the forming of the Combined Services Hockey Association, now the AFHA.

Other notable hockey anniversaries are:

■ **2016/17:** Armed Forces Women's 70th anniversary

■ **2017/18:** Centenary of annual Army v Navy men

■ **2018/19:** 100th anniversary of the first Army v Navy match and 120th anniversary of the founding of Gosport Borough Hockey Club

■ **2019/20:** Centenary of the formation of the Combined Services Sports Board and centenary of the RAF joining the Inter-Service competition versus the Army and RN.

## Raiders drop by

TRAINEES at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose were treated to some professional coaching from one of the country's top basketball teams.

High-flying British Basketball League team Plymouth Raiders paid a visit to the Naval airbase after PTI Dean Goulding contacted their head of community coaching.

Dean wanted to break up the physical training routines for the trainees and introduce a variety of instructors with specialised coaching and styles.

"This is providing a lot of variation for the guys," said Dean. "They get to see a whole host of sports available to them and we can keep an eye out for any new talent for our own basketball team – the Seahawks."

The training session proved so popular that other sailors from the station also joined in to get some top coaching from a professional basketball instructor.

"We are really grateful for Danny Stevens coming down to take the session," added Dean.

"We're keen to make it a regular feature for the air station."



## BRNC tack the honours in dinghy competition

FIFTY-FIVE dinghy races over two days saw a team from Britannia Royal Naval College become the winners of the 2016 Holt Cup held on the River Lynher near HMS Raleigh.

Eleven teams took part in the first Royal Navy inter-region sailing competition to be hosted by Raleigh, from the base's Sea Sense training centre at Jupiter Point.

Racing in Topaz Argo dinghies owned by the Combined Cadet Force, each team took to the water on a round-robin basis to race over a course

measuring roughly 150 yards square.

The teams fielded two boats per race, crewed by two people, with a maximum of eight boats on the water at any one time.

In windy conditions the races took on average eight minutes and 30 seconds to complete with points accrued to decide the finalists.

The team representing BRNC came out on top in the final sailing against one of the three teams from the Eastern region.

HMS Raleigh was represented by CO Capt Rob

Bellfield, his deputy Cdr Sean Brady and three recruits who are undergoing their ten-week initial naval training course at the base, Joel Rogers, Lewis Newman and Maria Law.

Recruit Rogers, 19, from Norwich, who is currently in his eighth week of training, said: "The racing was intense, everyone was very competitive. The conditions were really windy, about 15 knots gusting to 25, which made things very interesting."

Organised by the Royal Navy Sailing Association, around 50 people took part.

# Boston's no tea party

## Tough test brings out the best from rowers

POPT Ian Robinson smiles at the start of his men's lightweight 30-plus row – and collapses in a heap at the end, having achieved a personal best time of 7min 07.8 sec.

His time, which put him in 13th place, was one of 11 personal or season bests recorded by the strongest Royal Navy Indoor Rowing Team to compete at the World Indoor Championships in Boston.

Five of the male rowers went under the gold standard time of 6min 30sec in individual 2k races as the RN team, 14 men and two women, competed with 2,500 rowers at the Agannis Arena.

Highlight of the event was the four-man men's team finishing third in the 4,000m team race with a time of 3min 07.6sec, less than seven seconds behind the winning Spanish national side.

Many of the Royal Navy team had benefited from the personal coaching of LPT Ollie Osborne (RNAS Culdrose) since the Royal Navy Championships in November last year, which has evolved into the Royal Navy Indoor Rowing Performance Programme – not for the faint hearted.

Fastest Royal Navy rower in a 2k race was LS Kieran Heffernan (HMS Defender) with a personal best of 6min 19.1sec, finishing in 11th place in the men's heavyweight 30-plus category.

Lt Cdr Jim Hyde (HMS Northumberland) rowed a



seasonal best of 6min 27.9sec to finish 16th in the same race.

Lt Cdr Jim Thomson (HMS Lancaster) was the second fastest RN rower with a seasonal best of 6min 20sec, finishing 12th in the men's heavyweight 40-plus race.

Not far behind was WOPT



'Tiny' Nash (Nelson) with a seasonal best of 6min 30.2sec in 17th place, then CPO Justin Doney (829 NAS) 23rd with a personal best of 6min 35.8sec and Cdr Derek Powles (DES Bristol) 28th in 6min 39.7sec.

CPO Collin Leiba (MCTA)

finished tenth in the men's heavyweight 50-plus with a seasonal best time of 6min 29.5sec.

WO1 Andy Patience (HMS Collingwood) finished 27th with a time of 6min 57.3sec.

Team manager Paul Winton (MCTA) finished 18th in the men's heavyweight 55-plus race with a time of 7min 8sec.

Third fastest overall in the RN team was Mne John Leonard (CLR) in the men's open heavyweight, the toughest of all the categories. He finished 52nd in a time of 6min 22.3sec, followed by Lt Rory McAlpine (HMS Lancaster) in 79th place with a seasonal best of 6min 33.6sec and ET(WE) Alastair Packman (Nelson) in 92nd spot with a time of 6min 38sec.

CPO Medical Technician Claire McLennan (MDHU Portsmouth) rowed a personal best time of 7min 48.3sec to finish 12th in the women's heavyweight 30-plus category, with NA(SE) Aaby Aldridge (RNAS Culdrose) 87th in the women's open heavyweight race with a time of 7min 46.7sec.

LH Andy Card (MOD London) was tenth in the men's lightweight 40-plus race with a time of 7min 07.1sec.

The grand finale saw four rowers – Heffernan, Hyde, Leiba and Thomson – finish third in a time of 3min 07.6 sec in the team 1,000m race to top a great outing by the RN team.

## Vain bid to win trophies

IT was a disappointing end to the season for all of the Royal Navy Football Association's teams in the Inter-Service contest.

The Under-23s suffered a 4-0 drubbing at the hands of the RAF, followed by a 5-1 loss to the Army, who took the crown.

Next up were the RN Women, who took on the RAF at HMS Collingwood to compete for a new trophy in memory of RAF Sgt Lynsey Miller, who lost her fight against cancer earlier in the year.

The RN took the lead thanks to MA Sue Badger with AET Anthea Kaptein adding a further two goals before half-time.

The second half saw a spirited comeback by the RAF, reducing the deficit by two, however the RN stayed in control to secure a well deserved 3-2 win. Sgt Miller's father, Vince, presented the new trophy to RN captain POPT Nat Bavister.

The next RN women's game v the Army kicked off at Military Stadium, Aldershot.

AET Emma Field put the RN ahead but the Army drew level.

The following week the RAF lost 5-0 for the Army to retain the championship.

The RN Senior side kicked off their opening Inter-Service match against the RAF at HMS Temeraire.

Despite POPT Dave Berry hitting the underside of the RAF crossbar, the match ended goalless.

The Navy's final competitive game of the campaign was at the Military Stadium, Aldershot Garrison, against the Army.

On a heavy pitch both teams laid claim to the game, there were limited early exchanges in the first 15 minutes, with the Army coming closest to scoring.

A couple of quick saves by the RN goalkeeper, POPT Matt Shortt, kept the RN in the game.

As both teams pushed for a goal, it was the Army who took advantage in the 65th minute when they were awarded a penalty, which was converted by the Army striker.

The RN pushed forward for an equaliser but the Army took the honours. The Army went on to beat the RAF 2-0 to take the title.

Please visit [www.royalnavyfa.com](http://www.royalnavyfa.com) for all things Navy football.

# Netballers' victory ends 23 years of hurt

THE Royal Navy Netball Association secured the Inter-Service Championship for the first time in 23 years.

Hosted by the RAF at Cosford, each Service may enter three teams to compete in the Masters, Development or Open competitions.

The RN dominated in both their games against the Army and RAF, taking the lead from the first quarter.

This year saw Wtr Megan Bailey captain the open squad with LMA Rachel Markham in charge of the seconds.

It was the first season with the team for defender Std Lucy Darke, but this didn't faze her and she was awarded the coaches' player and players' player of the season awards.

The season was the last for RNNA coach Lt Cdr Linda Cairney, who was also studying for her UKCC Level 3 coaching award.

The RN won their first match in the Open contest, beating the Army 32-23 before meeting the RAF in the final where they won 28-16. The Development contest saw the RN lose 44-20 to the Army in match one, before also losing 24-14 to the RAF. The Army won the final.

The following presentations were also made:  
Team Poppy Fair Play Award Masters winner: WO Max Martin (RAF); Team Poppy Fair Play Award Development winner: Sgt Syreeta Cranston-Walters (Army); Team Poppy Fair Play Award Open winner: LNN Abigail Wrigley (RN); Masters Competition Winner: RAF; Development Competition Winner: Army; Development Player of the Tournament: SAC

Millie Cooper (RAF); Open Competition Winner: Royal Navy; Open player of the Championship: Sgt Nordia Masters (Army); UK AFNA Outstanding Contribution Award: Lt Cdr Linda Cairney (RN); 2015 UK AFNA Colours: LNN Abigail Wrigley (RN); Lt Gemma Pearson (Army); Lt Nai Watson-Campbell (Army); 2016 UK AFNA Squad: RN: MA Jordan Ayton, MA Nicola Albutt, LStd Lizzie Rowe, LNN Abigail Wrigley, LPT Phillips, LSC Shanda Hanson, Std Darke. Army: Pte Salome Sauduadua, Sig Kate Buckley, OC Laura Tognarelli, L/Cpl Melissa Price, Lt Rachel Hockenhuil, Cpl Laura Duckworth, L/Cpl Allayne Taylor, Sgt Nordia Masters, Sgt Syreeta Cranston-Walters, Sgt Ellie Nawele. RAF: SAC Lucie Holt, SAC(T) Keren Eccles, Sgt Shelley Garrett, Sgt Claire Bullen.

For details about netball contact Emily Loftus: [NAVYPERS-TEMERAIRNSO7@mod.uk](mailto:NAVYPERS-TEMERAIRNSO7@mod.uk)/202392573073.



# Ski sundae

## Sweet debut for RN women in the Alps



**SAILOR** Georgie Howard helps make history as the first female Royal Navy and Royal Marines Nordic Ski Team competes at the British Nordic Ski Championships.

AB Howard, along with AB Rebecca Stansfield and Lt Ali Armstrong, were selected for the sport, which combines cross-country skiing and biathlon, which sees competitors skate on skis and shoot rifles.

"How hard can it be?" was Lt Armstrong's response when asked about joining the sport. "How wrong was I? It's one of the hardest sports, as you use every muscle in your body and need technical skills but it is a lot of fun and a good challenge."

Exercise Rucksack was the final competition of the season with the nationals and Inter-Service Championships at the Ruhpolding World Cup course in Germany.

The Army took the honours while the RN men's novice team secured at

least gold and silver in each race. However the Army females remained on the podium for the women's races.

The team's journey began early last year at Arbroath in Scotland, with a selection weekend combining being taught how to roller ski, bleep tests, circuits and a hill race in Stirling.

Selection complete, the team of 12 – nine Royal Marines and three women from the RN – was ready for training.

Summer training comprised of up to two weeks in Bavaria with more roller skiing, mountain biking and some running. AB Howard was the only female able to attend the training and by the end had mastered roller skiing, which made the transition easier when she tackled skating on skis in Oslo, Norway.

Training, which initially took place on a small golf course because of a lack of snow, was led by Royal Marine Joe Brooks, a former World Cup Biathlete.

a lot of falls and a few broken bindings we were promoted to the big league and started training on the Lillehammer Olympic Course where the Army teams were also training," said Lt Armstrong.

"As well as ski training, we waxed skis, practised dry shooting, went for jogs around Oslo and had a lot of rest time so we could perform to our best abilities.

"After just three weeks on snow we had our first mini biathlon race against a couple of the Army novice teams where both the RNRN male and female team secured first and second places."

The team's first major contest was against the Army during Exercise White Fist on the Hochfilzen World Cup course at Saalfelden in Austria.

It involved three races, a classic race, an individual biathlon race and a biathlon relay.

"Having spent most of our time

"After training skating, running uphill with skis on proved to be a new challenge, which the ladies' team did not excel at but were not last," said Lt Armstrong.

"From each race and training day we learned something new, whether it was shooting with a heart rate above 170bpm, how to efficiently climb hills or transfer smoothly from skating to shooting."

The male novice team secured first and second place in both the classic and individual biathlon race.

The male A team were subsequently invited to France for a week after these races for the divisional competition, Exercise Spartan Hike, where the Army regimental teams qualify for the finals and where once again the novice category was dominated by the Royal Marines.

Anyone interested in joining the RNRN Nordic team for the 2016/17 season should check the Royal Navy Winter Sports Association website or speak to your unit PTI.



● Main picture: AB Georgina Howard in action on the slopes; From left, Lt Ali Armstrong competes against Flt Sgt Anna Irwin of the RAF, AB Rebecca Stansfield fires in the stand position at Ruhpolding; The RNRN Nordic Ski Team



● Matt Dawson presents the trophy to the RN Volleyball squad

## Volleyball team triumph

THE Royal Navy Volleyball team scooped one of the most coveted trophies – the UK Armed Forces Sports Team of the Year award.

The trophy, in the shape of a ceremonial dagger, was presented to the side by former England international rugby union star Matt Dawson.

The trophy topped a great year for the team as they beat the RAF – for the first time since 1975 – to take the Inter-Service crown.

Team captain Lt Cdr Colin Rex, who received the award on behalf of the side, said: "This is the culmination of a three-year plan to recruit, train and to improve the standard of the team to finally wrestle the Inter-Service volleyball title from the RAF."

"The level of commitment and determination shown by all the players who have represented the team has been exceptional and it is not often you get to coach a side that has every rank in the Royal Navy represented – from able rate to captain – playing

for you."

In the other Armed Forces Sports awards categories at the RAF Club, snowboarder LAET Ross Taylor was runner-up in the Sportsman of the Year award category and basketball player Naval Airman Harriet Yea claimed the runner-up prize as Sportswoman of the Year.

WO2 Al Curtin RM, the driving force behind Combined Services martial arts for over 15 years, was piped to the post for the Official of the Year award by the Army nominee, who is one of the countries' leading amateur boxing referees.

The Royal Navy Volleyball Association is continuing to actively recruit new players for both the women's and men's teams as they look to build on their success.

Anyone wishing to either return to or take up volleyball can do so by contacting club secretary Lt Danny Bonner at [daniel.bonner970@mod.uk](mailto:daniel.bonner970@mod.uk)



● Helen Leigh

## Constable draws on strength for contest

A CLYDE-BASED Ministry of Defence Police Officer was representing the UK Police Service in the European Police Cross-Country Championships at Warwickshire as *Navy News* went to press.

Constable Helen Leigh, who joined the MOD Police in January last year, is currently on secondment to the MOD Police's Criminal Investigation Department at HM Naval Base Clyde.

"I represented the MOD Police at the National Police Cross Country Championships in Stockport where I was pleased to finish third and gain an automatic qualifying spot for the European Championships," she said.

"My main focus for the year is attempting to qualify for the World Ultra Trail Championships in Portugal, having had some good results over 40 and 50-mile races last year.

"With this step up in distance, my training has not really been orientated towards fast cross-country running, so I was really pleased with my performance and I'm looking forward to representing the force at international level."

Helen is due to compete in the Highland Fling Race this month which takes place over half of the West Highland Way – some 53 miles – and doubles as a qualifier for the Ultra Distance World Trail Championships.

A top-three finish would be enough to secure a spot representing Great Britain in the world championships.

## Veteran sets a fast pace

PROVING age is no barrier to fitness is Lt Cdr Tony Dunn who, at the age of 51, is aiming to represent England in cross-country running.

The officer, who works at HMNB Devonport, was selected as a second reserve on the British Masters Athletics Federation team for the International Cross-Country Championships in Dublin.

However he wasn't required but did get to race in the 6k open race, finishing fifth overall and the second veteran.

Tony, who last year totted up the miles as he ran six days every week, is now hoping to don a British vest for the British and Irish Masters Cross-Country International in Glasgow in November.

He is coached by former submariner Lt Cdr Graeme Riley and supported by Lt Cdr Ginge Gough, of HMS Temeraire, and trains out of Bickleigh Barracks in Plymouth.



# Fancy a wet?

## Navy team take top four places in driving contest



● The victorious Royal Navy and Royal Marines Off Road Team

Pictures: Neil Watterson

**TWO Royal Navy sailors make a splash in a vehicle rather than a ship to take the honours in the first Roadmaster contest of the year.**

PO Andrew Richman is navigating as LAET Rory Lowther drives their Land Rover through the water to mark the first event of the 2016 4x4 navigation contest.

The duo, both from 815 NAS at Yeovilton, were joined by seven other sailors and five Royal Marines from the Off Road Team as they braved freezing temperatures to drive seven Land Rovers over nine events, including orienteering, day and night navigation, and an obstacle course at Salisbury Plain.

Organised by the British Army Motorsports Association, various techniques are required to complete the course, such as using maps of different scales, which require the navigators to plot their route using grid references, or aerial photographs of a route, which really puts navigation skills to the test.

The route also often takes competitors through the most challenging terrain available, with many drivers finding themselves stuck in mud or with Land Rovers full of water. Competing at Inter-Service level with 43 competitors from all three Services, including many

professional drivers, the Navy team took the top four overall places.

Following LAET Lowther and PO Richman were second-placed CPO Trevor Harmer (CHF) and LH Patrick Beckett (HMS Sultan), with Sgt Kev O'Gorman (CTC) and Lt Luke Holdcroft (HMS Trenchant) in third and WO Pete Beswick (CTC) and Lt Bart Nelson (HMS Trenchant) in fourth place.

The team from Yeovilton also won the first team prize, with O'Gorman and Holdcroft taking the beginners' title and Lowther and Richman taking the expert accolade.

C/Sgt Matt Symes (CHF) and Lt Paul White (BRNC) finished seventh overall – despite parking their vehicle on the drivers' side doors. Mne Callum Jarvis and Sgt Colin Hodgson (both CTC) came 13th and Mne Edd Hill (CTC) and LH Ali White (HMS Vivid) finished one place behind them.

The placings provided a boost to the Royal Navy team bidding to defend their Inter-Service Champion Navigator title and take the Inter-Service Champion Driver title from the Army.

The RNRM Off Road Team compete at six events from February to December, with the next contest at Swynnerton Training Area in Staffordshire on April 2.

## Sherrington returns aiming for grand time in Rio

ROYAL Marine judo star Chris Sherrington has come out of retirement in a bid to qualify for the Olympic Games in Rio this summer.

Chris, who won gold for Scotland in the 100kg+ men's judo category at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games, initially retired from the sport to focus on his military career but recently discovered he has a chance of qualifying for Brazil.

Despite not having competed in judo since the Commonwealth Games, Sherrington took gold at his debut competition last month at the Swiss European Cup, beating all his opponents with an ippon.

"The Swiss Open was a good result for both myself and Royal Navy Judo," said Chris. "I'm happy with the way I performed, however this was just the first step of many to qualify for the Rio Olympic Games. I'm hopeful and it's definitely not too far out of reach to qualify, but it's a big ask with only three months and three events to do it!"

Chris, who donned his Green Beret

after receiving his medal in Scotland, will not be funded by British Judo or JudoScotland, but will train at the JudoScotland centre at Ratho and at the Edinburgh Judo Club.

In order to qualify for Rio, Chris needs to win two medals from the three Grand Prix events he has entered. It's a tall order, but the Marine is up for the challenge.

"There are many moving parts to qualifying for Rio, so for the time being I'm remaining quietly confident," he said. "The future isn't set and there is still time so I'll try my very best. Being a Royal Marine Commando, it's my job to face seemingly impossible tasks and make them happen. As we say in the Marines, no cuff too tough!"

Chris really has a challenge on his hands, as most judoka try for the full two years and still don't qualify.

He added: "Many people go through life missing the opportunity to do something great for the fear of failing. I would rather try to qualify for Rio and fail, than never have tried at all."



● Chris Sherrington celebrating his gold medal at the Commonwealth Games

Picture: Courtesy of Jeff Holmes www.jshpix.co

## RN trio join GB Masters

THREE Royal Navy judo players have qualified for the GB Masters Team.

LSC Ronda Crampton-Reid joins WO1 John Thacker and L/Cpl Colin Francis, who were both on the team in 2015.

Both WO1 Thacker and L/Cpl Francis won medals in the British Championships while LSC Crampton-Reid won medals in both the British and World Championships.

WO1 Thacker and LSC Crampton-Reid are now competing at the British Commonwealth Masters Judo in South Africa this month, followed by the South African Open Championships.

■ The UK Armed Forces Judo Association is holding a women's training camp for Novice to Dan grades at HMS Sultan on April 14-15.

You need to be currently serving either in full time or reserve Service, be a member of the Sports Lottery or your Service equivalent and be fit for contact sporting activity. Accommodation is available.

Contact L/Cpl Sarah Hawkes at [hawkes100@mod.uk](mailto:hawkes100@mod.uk) or call 07751929162.





# On final approach

## Legendary Junglie Sea Kings prepare to bow out

**AS COMMANDO missions go, it doesn't get any easier.**

The weather's fair. Not redders. Or icers.

The rolling terrain is cluttered but homely. Not an endless expanse of beige or white. No mountains.

The reception is warm, not hot, the natives friendly, not hostile, or desperate, begging to be rescued, waiting for food or supplies. No RPGs, Ak47s. Just excited youngsters waving.

Dropping in on a school – in this case Exeter School – is bread and butter; brief 20-minute flights around Devon for 80 Combined Cadet Force students as part of their training.

With front-line duties handed over to the green Merlin (newer, faster, more powerful, carries more – and further... we'll reserve judgment on whether it's better), it's left to the Sea King to carry out (mostly) mundane, but still important, work around the UK in the final weeks of its commando career.

And what a career. Falklands. Northern Ireland. Iraq (first time around). Bosnia. Kosovo. Sierra Leone. Al Faw and Basra. Helmand Province. Honduras. The Philippines. And when not on operations, training: the Med, Belize, Kenya, Oman, Norway and, (considerably) less exotic, Dartmoor, Saunton Sands, Salisbury Plain,



By the time you read this article, the skies of South West England will be empty of a helicopter which has come to define the Fleet Air Arm over the past three and a half decades: the Sea King Mk4. **RICHARD HARGREAVES** paid a final visit to the last unit still flying the big green Junglies, 848 Naval Air Squadron, at RNAS Yeovilton.

Browdown Beach.

Wherever the marines have been since 1979, Junglie Sea Kings have gone with them when the first models for use by the Royal Marines were delivered to 707 Squadron – Commando Helicopter Force didn't come into being until the late 90s, while the earlier 3 Commando Brigade Air Squadron was a separate entity used largely for battlefield reconnaissance.

In the 37 years since its debut (that's a decade after the submarine-hunting variant was first handed over to the Fleet Air Arm), it's become the commandos' workhorse ferrying troops, kit, food, weaponry, even field guns and vehicles.

It's not nimble or speedy like the Lynx and Gazelles it flew alongside. It doesn't have the punch of an Apache. It doesn't have the aura and distinct wocca-wocca sound of a Chinook.

And yet...

For an aircraft designed 60 years

ago and flying since the end of the 1950s in various forms, Sea King is certainly sturdier than Merlins, Lynx and Wildcats.

Touch wood, it'll survive most mishaps – save losing its tail rotor, all hydraulics or a catastrophic fire, a Sea King will come through.

"The lads on the ground will tell you: if you know a Sea King is coming, you're going to get home," says aircrewman C/Sgt Paul Collacott.

Pilot Lt Aaron Cross adds: "We can't match a Chinook – we've got 27 seats, Chinooks can carry twice that. Based on size, speed, what it can carry a soldier will take a Chinook over a Sea King – it's a better aircraft."

"But we've made a reputation as the 'can-do' guys, the people who step in when the other's can't make it."

That, of course, is not all down to the aircraft. It's down to the Junglie ethos, born in the wilds of Borneo in the 1960s (it gave the CHF its

collective nickname).

"There's an almost mythical ethos around the Junglies," says Lt Cross.

"For us it's about being the best battlefield support in the eyes of the troops."

"I'd rather be here than anywhere else."

When I called in on 848 in mid-February there was certainly a feeling of the end of the road for the Sea King – and that the time was right to bow out.

A couple of years ago you'd find nearly two dozen Sea Kings either in the hangar or on the standings.

With a month of 848 left to run, there were just five.

And from being the largest squadron in the Fleet Air Arm (440 men and women), a steady drip, drip, drip of personnel to other units (not least the Merlins of 845 and 846), there were fewer than 140 people on 848's muster roll.

This gradual winding down – there's no Sea King presence in Norway this year, just new Merlins and Wildcats – has finally allowed 848 to take bit of a breather.

"We've worked the Sea King really hard in some harsh environments – 21 years on continuous operations. Christmas 2014 was the first time in over two decades that the whole squadron had been together," says 848's final CO (in the squadron's

current incarnation) Cdr Gavin Simmonite.

And the last time was just after we went to press with this issue – a farewell flypast around Junglie haunts in central and south-west England (see next month's edition).

And then? Well, one will end up as a museum piece, some will go into storage, some may yet be sold to our allies still flying Sea Kings (there are about 400 active around the globe in various forms).


So what would a prospective buyer for these Mk4 troop-carrying models get for their 10 cents if they did invest? Well...

The cockpit is *ultra* analogue – dials, knobs, switches (there's a nod to digital with a small display, but not much else). It can't carry many troops fully kitted up – and they can't just walk straight aboard like on a Chinook or Merlin. It's sluggish. It doesn't like operating in hot climates (and nor do the crew – cockpit temperatures reached 75°C on occasions in Iraq). The fumes spilling into the cabin when the cargo door is opened will either knock you out or cause your breakfast to make a reappearance. You can't communicate unless you're on a headset... which leads to a snakes' wedding of cables. The seats are uncomfortable (especially on a long

Continued overleaf





 Continued from page 23 flight). By night, it's "like flying in a fridge" – and what heat can be pumped into the cabin is diverted from the engines (remember those less-than-pleasant exhaust fumes?).

And while there's the excitement of Al Faw or Sierra Leone, there's also the unrelenting tedium of a six-hour patrol of Afghanistan, which closed with the soul-sapping return to base across the 'red desert transit' – a featureless, but safe, route between Camp Bastion and Kandahar over the Rigistan Desert. Or the bleakness of Dartmoor in the depths of winter.

At this point, we're not really selling Sea King to you...

But it's simple, rugged, get in and go technology.

"You just grab a map, chinagraph pencil, climb aboard

a Sea King and go," says Paul.

"You look in the cockpit of a Merlin and it's like staring at five iPads."

He continues wistfully: "I will miss them. I've done so much on them – 18 tours in all: Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan. Loads of memories."

"I guess in ten years' time I'll have similar memories of the Merlins."

Sea King's nemesis sits not 100 metres away on the Yeovilton standings: the Merlins of 846 NAS. When 848 shuts up shop for good (the lights are turned out in June), 845 NAS will decamp from 'exile' at RAF Benson and move into the Sea King squadron's former home, bringing their sparkly new steeds with them.

Some of the old guard – air and ground crew – will stay on; others, like CPO Colin Whitfield,

will move on to fresh pastures after a career dealing with pretty much nothing but Sea Kings, first in the grey world, down at Culdrose – 706, 810, 849 – then green up at Yeovilton.

He much prefers working on the Junglies than their pinger and bagger counterparts, even though the basic helicopters themselves are largely identical.

"I've really enjoyed my time here, gone places that we'd never go to with the grey fleet, and the camaraderie on CHF is unsurpassed."

"Going ashore at Al Faw is the stand-out for me. No running water, no electricity, a little bowl for shaving. All good fun. But that's what we're here to do – and we do it properly."

He realises that the venerable helicopter is long in the tooth – "With all the modifications they've had down the years,

they're not easy to maintain; there are boxes stacked upon boxes" – but remains to be convinced that the Merlin will be looked on as fondly.

"Computers don't like dirt, vibration, heat – and that's what you get when you fly Junglie."

It is. And that's why people choose Junglie (the final Sea King crews only passed out of training at the beginning of last year).

"It's what I was gunning for throughout training – to 'go Junglie', the opportunity to do front-line flying," says pilot Lt Alex Craig.

"You've got snow, you've got desert, you've got mountains, you've got amphibious operations. Compared with the 'grey' fleet, Junglie life is more varied. And there's a 'can-do' attitude which pervades the force."

C/Sgt Collacott nods. "I wanted something more testing, more challenging." Before becoming an aircrewman, he was responsible for setting up makeshift landing sites in the field.

"It's lived up to expectations – and more so."

He's signed up for the switch to Merlin, as has AET Rich Hall, who's spent three years toiling to ready Sea Kings for sorties.

"It's a shame to see them go – no doubt about it, this is the end of an era. I don't really want to leave, but Merlin's a new challenge."

"You hear people say: Give me a Sea King any day. They are reliable – you feel safe in them."

Indeed, its safety record is admirable – particularly in light of how hard it's been worked and where it's been sent.

"Most people think that if you

are going to get any scrapes, a Sea King will get you out of them," Cdr Simmonite says.

And he knows that all too well. Back in 2009, his Junglie came under a hail of small arms fire when delivering equipment to ground troops.

Not only did some bullets pierce the thin metal skin and ricochet around the cabin, but one struck the control cable for the tail rotor, slicing through all but one of the strands.

Ordinarily, that would have been the end of the mission – but in the circumstances there could be no such thought and the then lieutenant commander guided his 'wounded' Sea King back to base, saving crew and machine.

The then lieutenant commander was subsequently awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for demonstrating





“exceptional airmanship” – although, with typical British modesty he says: “We’ve had a bit of luck, but everyone deserves to be lucky.”

There is none luckier than ZA298, aka ‘King of the Junglies’.

She was handed over to the Fleet Air Arm in late 1981... ..and just a few months later was coming under fire from 30mm shells spewed out by a cannon on an Argentine Sky Hawk over the Falklands. One of the rotor blades was hit, patched up, and two hours later the helicopter was off on another mission.

A couple of days later, the guns were silent as General Mario Menéndez, the Argentine commander in the islands, was ferried to HMS Fearless by ZA298 where initial surrender negotiations were being held.

Fast forward another decade and another conflict, Bosnia, and small arms fire peppered the helicopter.

But the closest shave came in late 2009 when the King of the Junglies was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade which struck just behind the cockpit – and passed out of the other side of the fuselage.

No-one was harmed beyond the door gunner who suffered minor injuries – but the helicopter itself needed 18 months in the repair shed before resuming flying duties.

ZA298’s longevity is down to the rugged simplicity of the Sea King’s design, some top-notch flying, and a slice (or two or three) of good fortune.

Given her various scrapes, it’s understandable why ZA298 enjoys legendary status among the CHF community.

Otherwise, the Junglie fleet (or what’s left of it now) is pretty much interchangeable.

The helicopters don’t have names. They certainly don’t have personalities. But they’re not identical.

The radio in one might be a bit iffy, cab A might vibrate a bit more than B, C or D, and E might shake a lot when hovering.

One cab, identical to the others in every respect, might be 10mph faster than its sister.

There’s no logic to it. It’s just accepted as a Sea King thing.

“It’s like owning an old, classic car,” says Cdr Simmonite. “You start to bond with them.”

He’s flown more than 2,000 hours in them – over 11 weeks in the cockpit.

“It such a great, iconic aircraft. Everyone recognises it, everyone around Yeovil and Yeovilton knows a Sea King,”

848’s CO adds.

“I hope people will remember us in the same way they feel nostalgic for the Harriers.”

We shouldn’t overly romanticise a 60-year-old aircraft, however (although many of the last Junglies in service were among the final Sea Kings to roll off the production line just down the road at the Westland – now Finmeccanica – at the end of the 1980s).

Every hour in the skies demands 12 ‘man hours’ of maintenance on the ground.

Messy man hours at that.

“Taking the main oil sample,” sighs Rich. “If you get it wrong, 80 litres of the black stuff comes pouring out.”

Which is bad.

I remember my first visit to a Merlin and was taken aback by the clean hangar – no drip pans all over the shop.

On a Sea King, drops of oil aren’t to be feared. It’s when it stops dripping – or so Fleet Air Arm folklore goes – that you start worrying; the oil’s run out...

CPO Colin Whitfield sees it slightly differently. “The smooth ones are the ones you worry about. A Sea King should vibrate.”

We could go on with such tales (some true, some not, almost all embellished) because they’d fill a book or two.

I cannot add my own, but seared into my mind is the sight of sticks of Royal Marines, weighed down by bergens, faces smeared with camouflage paint, being ushered aboard Sea Kings lined up on the deck of HMS Ark Royal in the small hours of Friday March 21 2003.

One by one, the helicopters lifted off from the deck and disappeared into the endless

night – and an uncertain fate.

A few hours later, Ark’s captain provided an update on progress over the carrier’s main broadcast. The helicopter assault on the Al Faw peninsula – the tongue of Iraq sticking out into the Gulf between the Shatt-al-Arab and Khawr-abd-Allah waterways – had succeeded. The commandos were ashore. The enemy was surrendering. The sailors around me cheered.

That probably says as much about the mentality of matelots as it does about the Junglie Sea King.

But it’s a reminder that, as C/Sgt Collacott points out, “when you join the Junglie world, you’re joining a long, proud history”.

It’s now time for the Merlin to write the next chapter.

Pictures: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum, RNAS Yeovilton





# Naval Pedigree

**AW<sub>159</sub>**

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